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EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF A MENTOR-BASED PROGRAM ON
TEACHER RETENTION IN A LARGE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

By

Denise S. Beattie

A Dissertation in Practice

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctorate in Education

Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership at Lynn University,

College of Education

Lynn University

2013

ABSTRACT

DENISE BEATTIE: Evaluation of the Impact of a Mentor-Based Induction Program on Teacher Retention

Feelings of isolation and defeat experienced by many novice teachers during their initial years have caused them to leave the profession before they are able to impact students' academic performance. The School District of Palm Beach County, afflicted by the cyclic trend of having to recruit and retrain beginning teachers, partnered with the New Teacher Center in 2009 to implement a mentor-based induction program. The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the support provided by the district's mentor-based program on teacher retention as it compared to the support provided by school-based mentoring. A quasi-experimental design was used to determine whether there were any differences between teachers who participated in the district's mentor-based program and those who participated in a school-based program; specifically, teachers' induction program experiences and the likelihood of teacher retention. The results of the study suggest that demographics had no significance on the teachers' perception of their induction program. Furthermore, data from the survey indicate that although teachers who were assigned full-release mentors had a more positive experience during their beginning years as professionals their decision to remain in the profession was not greater than those who were assigned school-based mentors. On the contrary, results from the focus group imply that mentees with full-released mentors were more content with their work environment and were more likely to remain in the classroom longer in comparison to their colleagues supported by school-based mentors.

Order Number: _____

EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF A MENTOR-BASED PROGRAM ON
TEACHER RETENTION IN A LARGE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Beattie, Denise S., Ed.D.

Lynn University, 2013

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Of the 310,000 teachers who enter the teaching profession each year (Papay, 2007), approximately 30% leave within three years, and up to 50% leave within their first five years (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Ingersoll, 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Achinstein & Athanases, 2006; Flynt & Morton, 2009). According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) policymakers continue to make the assumption that the primary reason for the teacher shortage is teachers retiring. However, retirees are responsible for only 16% of the attrition rate (Ingersoll, 2001; 2004). Discontent with workplace conditions and lack of support received from administrators have been cited as the primary reasons why teachers leave the profession prematurely (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Feelings of isolation and defeat experienced by many beginning teachers during their first year have caused them to leave the profession before they are able to impact students' academic performance. In recognition of the need to be more supportive of beginning teachers as they make the transition from university classrooms to classrooms of their own, numerous states have initiated teacher induction program reforms in a bid to better meet the needs of these novice educators.

According to Achinstein and Athanases (2006), an interest in new teacher support and induction programs flourished in the 21st century, yielding an increase in teacher retention, greater use of effective instructional practice, and improved student

achievement. In addition, studies have shown that induction programs providing beginning teachers with greater support were more likely to improve the retention rate of beginning teachers than those that only offered more limited support (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Yet, despite the research, many school districts fail to provide teachers with a comprehensive program that supports them during their most trying years in the profession. The five support structures of a comprehensive induction program consist of high quality mentoring, common planning time, ongoing professional development, external network of teachers, and a standards-based evaluation (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). According to Smith and Ingersoll (2004), less than 1% of teachers participate in comprehensive induction programs that met the following criteria: the inclusion of mentor and administrator support, collaboration time with colleagues, and additional support from an external network of teachers.

Significance of the Study

Teacher turnover, especially in low performing schools with high poverty student populations, has become a costly issue from a human and financial capital perspective (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007). The cost to the nation's taxpayers, an annual cost approximating \$7.3 billion in induction and professional development support for newly hired teachers, has encouraged school districts to explore innovative ways to address this issue (Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy, 2009). Yet, in order to determine the ideal method to remedy the over-expenditure of funds used to hire and retrain teachers, stakeholders need to understand the relationship between the following variables: teacher quality and the attrition rate.

Teacher quality. In addition to Ingersoll (2002, 2003, 2004, 2011, and 2012) and Darling-Hammond (1997), several other researchers have investigated factors contributing to student success. At the heart of the investigations, there was the core belief that teachers have a tremendous impact on student learning (Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 2007). Although many argued that student demographics played a huge role in student success, research concluded that the type of student population was strongly related to student outcomes only at individual state levels. Nonetheless, when aggregated at the state level, teacher quality superseded demographics and other factors (i.e. salary and class size) (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (2001), in its attempt to ensure highly qualified teachers in every classroom, “challenged traditional concepts of good teaching by emphasizing content mastery and verbal ability” (Blanton, Sindelar, & Correa, 2006, p. 116). In all their efforts to define *highly qualified*, federal policymakers determined that content expertise made teachers highly qualified to support student achievement (Brownell, Hirsh, & Seo, 2004). Hence, the focus of teacher quality was no longer on pedagogy, but instead on content mastery. In order to advance towards NCLB’s goal, many teacher preparation programs began to create alternative routes for prospective teachers that would move them into classrooms at a faster rate than through traditional four-year university programs.

The Alternative Certificate Program (ACP), one popular alternative to traditional teacher certification programs, began in the mid-1980s; however, it did not gain notoriety until the teacher shortage issue of the late 1990s. “As evidence of a teacher shortage mounted in the 1990s, colleges of education were strongly encouraged by K-12 school

districts, state officials, and agencies to develop creative alternatives to expand the base of new qualified schoolteachers” (May, Katsinas, & Moore, 2003, p. 68). Currently 48 states and the District of Columbia (Alaska and Oregon are the exceptions) have some form of ACP (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2010) in which nontraditional teacher candidates and career changers interested in pursuing a career in teaching, rely on community colleges, state colleges and universities to provide the courses they will need to enter the profession. These individuals usually have acquired their bachelor’s or advanced degrees in other areas of specialization and have not completed traditional teacher preparation programs. ACPs seek out midcareer individuals and middle-aged retirees from other professions who are already well-versed in the content they want to teach (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Candidates enrolled in an ACP are provided the opportunity to teach while pursuing certification. Although certification programs vary in purpose, content, and structure from state to state, the majority require trainings, licensure exams, coursework, and mentoring that would support the increased teacher quality; especially among males and minority teachers (Suell & Piotrowski, 2006).

According to the National Center for Education Information (2010), there were approximately 59,000 teachers who were certified through ACP from 1985 to 2009. In 2011, 16% of public school teachers entered the profession through various alternative certificate programs, administered by either colleges and universities or school districts. As the number of teachers hired from traditional teacher preparation programs steadily declined from 1980 to 2005, the proportion of new hires from non-education degree programs and alternative certification programs increased (Feistritzer, 2011). A study by Morris (2002) reflected that non-education majors who completed ACPs were more

likely to remain in the profession over time. Age and the academic major were other factors that had a significant impact on teacher retention. In addition, Wayman, Foster, and Mantale-Bromley (2003) have concluded that teachers trained via ACPs demonstrated similar levels of competencies in comparison to those from traditional degree programs. Incoming ACP teachers were considered to be adept in knowledge of content areas; but, they were not proficient in instructional pedagogy (Darling-Hammond, 2009). Once again, the call for reform was imminent as policymakers realized that content mastery and pedagogy were dependent on each other. This new call for reform preceded the emergence of the merit-pay system. According to Ritter and Jensen (2010), putting a value-added pay system in place would:

- Provide motivation, in the form of end-of-year bonuses, for teachers to focus more time and effort on improving student achievement;
- Provide increased financial incentives to the teachers who demonstrate high levels of effectiveness as a means to retain them; and,
- Encourage talented people to enter the field of education by creating a differentiated compensation plan that recognizes and rewards effectiveness.

Policymakers relied on studies based on the relationship between performance and pay to determine that a value-added merit pay system was necessary to distinguish between effective and ineffective teachers. Different states approached this process in a myriad of ways with varying degrees of success. Literature on the implementation of a value-added merit pay system in Florida gives a clear example of this process and thus will be used as an example.

In the state of Florida, Senate Bill 736 (Student Success Act) was signed into law by Governor Rick Scott on March 24, 2011. This law specified that school districts would now be held accountable for the implementation of value-added merit pay systems. The intent was to hold teachers accountable for students' performance by tying learning gains to teachers' salaries. On August 22, 2012, in a 57-page order, Administrative Law Judge John Van Laningham, rejected the state-approved rule that would determine how school districts should evaluate teachers. Although the ruling did not change the teacher evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year, it provided teachers' unions the opportunity to work with policymakers to determine the best way to implement the evaluation system in the upcoming years (Florida Education Association, 2012).

Within a value-added system, student learning gains are calculated based on the difference between the projected test scores calculated for students and students' actual scores on standardized tests (Koppich, 2005). Implementing a new system that would reward teachers for the quality of their work prompted school districts to seek out a plan for implementation that their current evaluation system would support. After considerable deliberation, the State of Florida decided to employ Dr. Robert Marzano's iObservation evaluation platform as the key component in evaluating teacher performance in the classroom (Toth, 2011). The protocol consists of a common language and an instructional framework principals and teachers can utilize to discuss the teachers' pedagogical skills based on data collected by the principal. The feedback, which is derived from various forms of data such as self-assessment, peer and mentor observations, student surveys, and frequent supervisor feedback (Schooling, Toth, & Marzano, 2011), allows principals to provide differentiated professional development assessments and plans based on

teachers' needs. Prior to the district's implementation of the evaluation system, teachers and school administrators were required to attend training sessions on the protocols in order to ensure that both parties were familiarized with the expectations of Dr. Marzano's platform.

Teacher attrition. According to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) Teacher Follow-up Survey (2010), of the 3.3 million public school teachers who taught during the 2007-2008 school year, 8% (approximately 270,424) left the profession the following year. Among those teachers with one to three years of experience, 9.1% (approximately 24,000) left the profession. In a report titled the School Finance Redesign Project, developed by the Center on Reinventing Public Education, the authors Milanowski and Odden (2007) addressed the cost of teacher turnover by studying the correlation of cost to teacher turnover in a large Midwestern urban school district of approximately 90,000 students that lost 10 - 12% of its teachers within their initial five years of employment. The authors broke down the cost of teacher turnover into the following constituent parts: 1) separating teachers from their districts, 2) hiring, paying, and training their replacements, and 3) calculating the value of lost productivity. In this way, the authors provided policymakers with a realistic example that explored the school-level costs associated with teacher turnover. Based on the study, the general cost of separation, replacement of staffing and training were not the major contributing factors in the cost of turnover, but rather they were part of a larger, more costly process derived from the continual cycle of having to replace experienced teachers with novice teachers (Milanowski & Odden, 2007).

In addition to the above cost related factors, Milanowski and Odden (2007) calculated the amount of money allotted for various purposes (i.e. staff time and severance pay, recruiting, interviewing, and application processing, teacher compensation, induction and professional development, and lost productivity) to estimate the average cost of replacing teachers with new hires. Using the lower-end turnover estimates from the authors' example, the cost of teacher turnover for taxpayers would average \$4 billion per year (Feng, 2009). Once the cost of replacing special education teachers was added to the above figure, taxpayers would end up paying an additional \$90 million a year (Brownell, Hirsh, & Seo, 2004). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) described a conservative national estimate of teacher turnover cost to average \$4.9 billion. This estimate includes not only replacing teachers who have left the profession, but also replacing teachers who transferred to different schools. After an 18-month pilot study that examined the cost of teacher turnover in five school districts across the country, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) estimated teacher turnover cost to be more than \$7 billion per year (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007).

The cost of teacher turnover does not only impact the nation's budget, but it also takes an organizational and human toll. According to Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005), districts, schools, parents, and students all suffer due to the loss of teachers in the profession. As districts attempt to adjust to reform initiatives, they experience the loss of teachers as an obstacle to the creation of the momentum necessary for building the type of positive environment needed to make the transition feasible. Schools lose the continuity and consistency associated with having a stable faculty and staff. Students

forced to adapt to the revolving door of teachers entering and leaving the workforce sometimes suffer from the emotional bonds that were established with teachers they considered to be the most important adults in their daily lives. Unable to make the connection between the loss of a teacher and the academic and socio-emotional impact on their children, parents often have to deal with the associated backlash in the form of behavioral and academic issues.

Most studies prior to the NCTAF study utilized industrial models to estimate costs in schools, which prompted researchers to become interested in designing an instrument that would accurately determine the cost of teacher turnover as it would appear in actual school districts. Walington, Shockely, Guglielmino, and Felsher (2010) designed the School Turnover Analysis (STA) in 2006 and shortly after, NCTAF created the Teacher Turnover Cost Calculator (TTCC) in 2007. The costs projected by each instrument vary as the STA instrument includes multiple categories within five cost areas: separation, recruitment, hiring, incentives, and new employee induction and professional development. The TTCC model, on the other hand, excluded separation costs and only considered advertising and hiring incentives within the following areas: four cost areas recruitment, hiring, incentives, and new employee induction & professional development) (Walington et al., 2010).

Rationale of the Study

Studies have shown that school districts that have implemented comprehensive induction programs have the lowest level of turnover as opposed to those districts that offer minimal support for beginning teachers (Wong, 2002). According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2004), a comprehensive induction program that combined

mentoring, professional development and support, and formative assessments for beginning teachers during their first two years of teaching had a more positive effect on the way teachers felt about themselves and the profession. Realizing the impact of a comprehensive induction program on teacher efficacy and retention, the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC) initiated a comprehensive induction program, consisting of full-release mentoring, during the 2009-2010 school year that would support their beginning teachers.

Although the SDPBC induction program encompassed the above components, there is a divide between which mentoring piece is more effective: full-release (full-time mentors) or school-based (part-time mentors). As a result, the SDPBC's Department of Professional Development is faced with the need to justify its mentor-based induction program to stakeholders on a yearly basis due to budget constraints. Utilizing the results from this study, along with data from the department of Human Resources, Recruitment and Retention, and Educational Data Warehouse, the district will be able to measure the impact of full-release mentoring as a valuable component of an induction program where focus is placed on the retention of beginning teachers.

Funding for induction programs continues to be inconsistent across districts and states as policymakers have yet to determine how much money should be allocated to support teachers during their critical first years. Since the initial survey conducted during the 2002-2003 school year, districts throughout the nation have used the bulk of Title II, Part II funds to support professional development and class-size reduction policies (USDOE, 2009). However, as the years progressed, there has been a shift in funding to primarily support professional development. Once a teacher has entered the classroom,

he/she does not receive the type of support necessary to develop his/her skills as a first year teacher. Since beginning teachers are just learning how to master their craft and have yet to establish the day to day routines and pedagogical skills necessary to impact their students they often require more assistance than their veteran counterparts. Yet, for the most part, novice teachers and veteran teachers receive similar professional development training opportunities even though their needs differ extensively.

Teachers in the United States participate in workshops and short-term professional development events at similar levels as teachers do in other nations, but they still lag behind in the provision of extended learning opportunities and productive collaborative communities necessary to support them in their pedagogical practices (Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). “The type of intense, collaborative, content-rich, and practice-focused professional learning, that leads to better student outcomes, is not typical in U.S. schools and districts” (Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010, p. 1). More studies that prove the effectiveness of comprehensive induction programs will more than likely result in an increase in the consistency of programs to support beginning teachers.

Theoretical framework. Teachers who are provided the opportunity to participate in induction programs are more likely to remain in the profession than those who are not supported during their first three years (Henke, Chen, & Geis, 2000; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Tushnet, Briggs, Elliot, Esch, Haviland, Humphrey, Rayyes, Riehl, & Young, 2002). In addition, beginning teachers who are provided the opportunity to develop as professionals through an ongoing structured induction program have a greater chance of remaining in the profession for at least the five years that will, in turn, allow

them to have a positive impact on student achievement (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Induction programs not only influence the retention rate of teachers (Wong, 2004), but also their confidence and effectiveness (Wechsler, Caspary, Humphrey, & Matsko, 2010). Beginning teachers, when provided an opportunity to participate in a comprehensive induction program, tend to promote the same level of student achievement as teachers who have been in the profession for over three years (Villar & Strong, 2007). The growth in support provided by induction programs can lead to a decrease in the attrition rate as long as participants have access to certain components of the program, i.e. high quality full-release mentoring, a reduced teaching load, a summative review, and off-campus networking. Induction programs with these components traditionally yield a higher result of retention when compared to programs without a structured support system in place (American Federation of Teachers, 2001). Figure A provides a diagram of the theoretical framework.

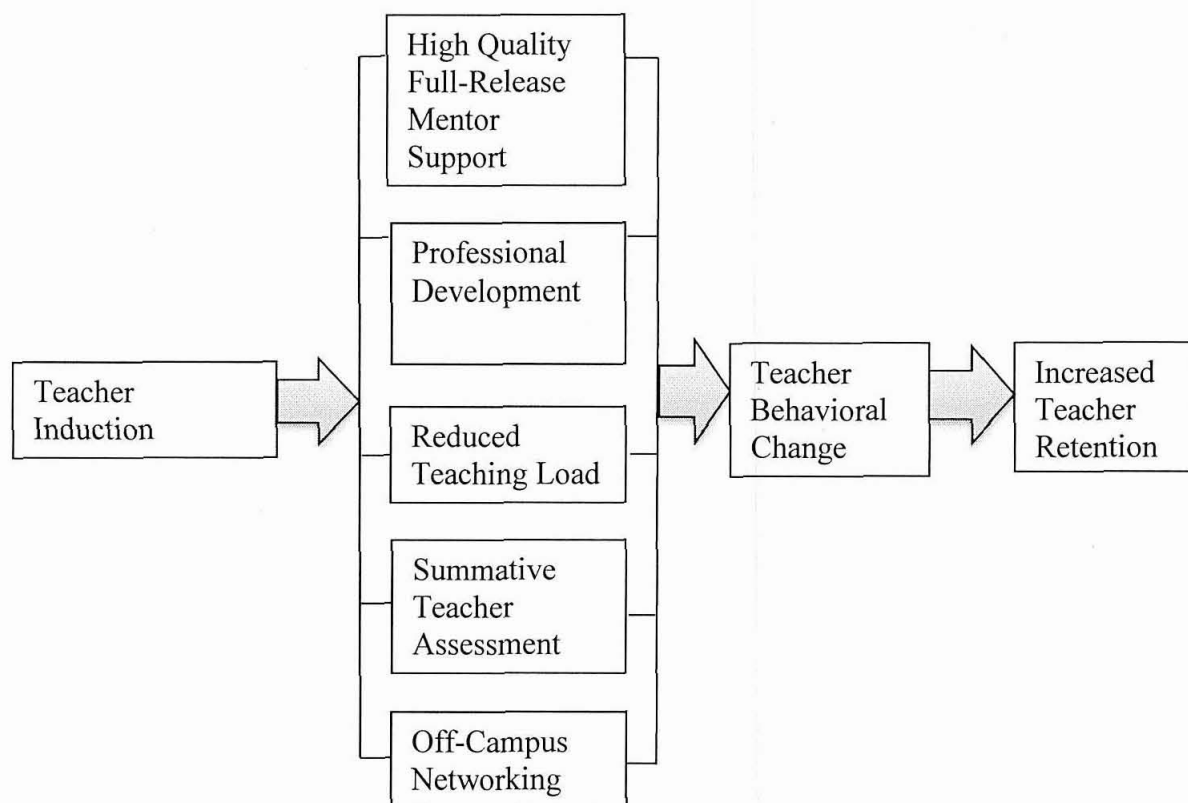


Figure A. The effectiveness of induction programs in regards to teacher retention.

Conceptual framework. According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), an effective new teacher induction program is essential for teacher development and retention. Despite the variance of induction programs across school districts and states, all entail having activities that support new teachers, such as orientation, classroom support, workshops, collaboration with colleagues, and mentoring. A comprehensive induction program, as defined by Smith and Ingersoll (2004), incorporates the following components for beginning teachers:

- Collaboration within small learning communities;
- Observation of experienced colleagues' classrooms;

- Being observed by expert mentors;
- Analysis and reflection of their own practice; and,
- Networking with other beginning teachers.

The conceptual framework displayed in Figure B illustrates the process of an induction program that enables classroom teachers to positively advance their practice, thereby, providing proactive support for their decision to remain in the profession long enough to impact student achievement.

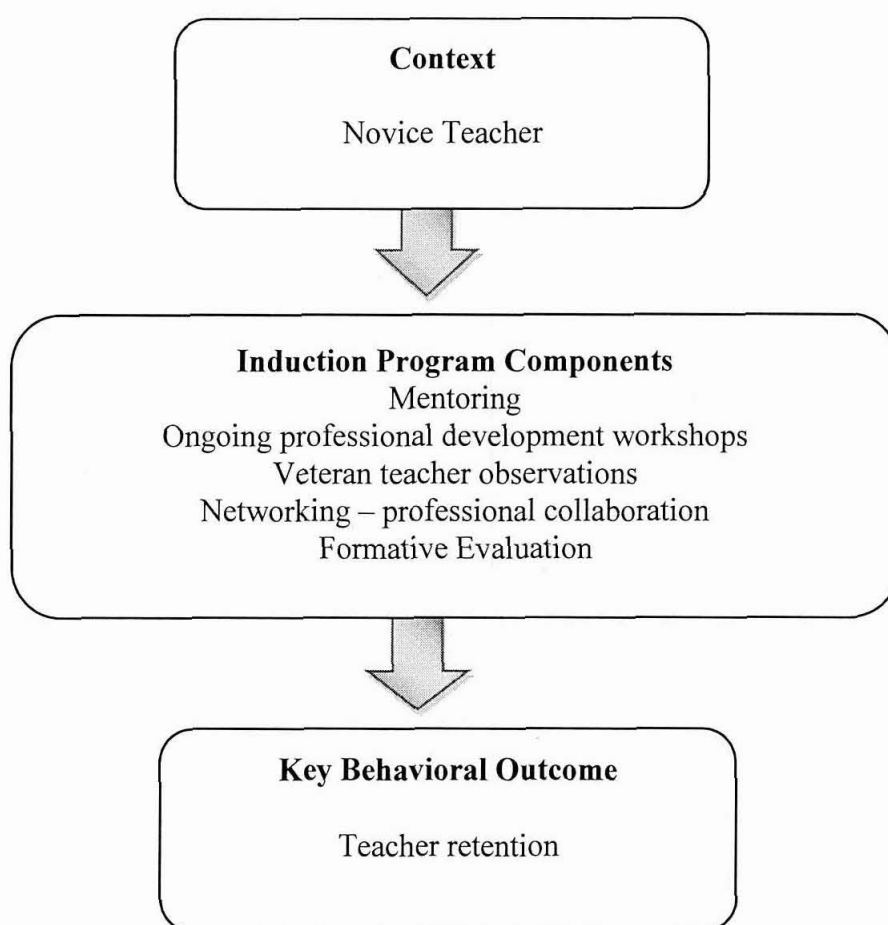


Figure B. Process of a comprehensive induction program that supports teacher and student outcomes.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study will be to determine the impact that specific support structures, within the SDPBC's Induction Program, had on teacher retention. The results from the study will be used to support the district's Department of Professional Development in redesigning an induction program based on the needs of beginning teachers through the utilization of funds from Title I and Title II, Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The research determined if there was enough data to substantiate the effectiveness of specific components within the district's induction program, as it related to teacher retention. The findings of this study supported the SDPBC in funding a mentor-based program for not only first and second year teachers employed in Differentiated Accountability (DA), Correct II schools, but also all first and second year teachers employed in non-Title I and Title I schools that are not in Correct II status. For study purposes, Correct II schools are identified as A, B, C, or ungraded schools not meeting at least 80% of the Annual Yearly Progress criteria (as determined by the state) for four or more years. The researcher utilized the sequential explanatory mixed method strategy as a means to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data. The researcher chose this methodology based on the Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick study (2006) that determined the ideal method for capturing the trends and details of a situation to be a mixed methods approach as neither quantitative nor qualitative are capable of doing so individually.

Research Questions

The following questions were used to guide this study:

- Q1. What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the SDPBC's induction program when they are receiving mentor-based versus school-based support?
- Q2. To what extent does the SDPBC's Educator Support Program (ESP) impact teacher retention?
- Q3. Based on focus group data, which component of the SDPBC ESP did teachers in the mentor-based and school-based programs believe to have the greatest impact on teacher retention?

Each of the above questions was designed to give the researcher an in-depth understanding of the extent to which the district's induction program supports efficacy and retention.

Assumptions

This study focused on the SDPBC's induction program, which consisted of three major components: mentoring, professional development, and teacher evaluation. In this study, as it relates to teacher retention, the following assumptions were outlined:

1. The researcher's sample was used to generalize beginning teachers in the SDPBC.
2. Participants were truthful in their responses on surveys and in focus groups.
3. The focus group substantiated the survey responses.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study was limited to beginning teachers employed in Differentiated Accountability (DA) Title I/Correct II schools. The 2011-2012 school year

consisted of approximately 680 first and second year teachers employed in DA, Correct II schools of which approximately 115 were supported by the district's assigned full-release mentors. This explanatory study examined the relationship between the impact of mentoring and a teacher's decision to remain in the profession. All first and second year teachers employed in 31 DA, Correct II schools, in which full-released and school-based mentors were employed, were invited to participate in this study. Due to the nature of this purposive sampling, the researcher was not able to generalize the results of this study to other populations within the school district (beginning teachers from non-Title I and non-Correct II schools participating in an induction program).

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions of terms are key concepts related to mentoring and teacher retention:

Beginning Teacher. A beginning teacher is any teacher who has been teaching for less than five years, roughly the time it takes a teacher to have a positive impact on student achievement (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This term is used interchangeably with the terms, novice or new teachers.

Comprehensive Induction Program. A comprehensive induction program includes the following five support structures: high quality mentoring, common planning time, ongoing professional development, external network of teachers, and a standards-based evaluation (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004).

Educator Support Program (ESP). The Educator Support Program is the SDPBC's formal induction program of support for newly hired educators (SDPBC, 2012). The program ensures teachers are supported with the following structures during

their first year in the profession: mentoring, ongoing professional development workshops, veteran teacher observations, networking, and formative evaluations. New educators are provided opportunities for staff development that will support them in increasing teacher quality; thus, ultimately, impacting student performance.

Full-release mentor. A full-release mentor is a teacher with a minimum of five years of teaching experience, recognized by employers as being effective and experienced in providing professional development or mentoring to other teachers (Isenberg, Glazerman, Bleeker, Johnson, Lugo-Gil, Grider, & Dolfen, 2009). The full-release mentor provides full-time support to novice teachers; no other responsibilities are given to the individual.

School-based mentor. A school-based mentor provides part-time support to novice teachers as they have other responsibilities within the school. This individual has at least three years of teaching experience and is usually on the same grade level or department, or teaching the same or a similar subject as the teacher receiving support. The responsibilities of the mentor include, but are not limited to, supporting the beginning teacher and completing informal observations to provide feedback (SDPBC, 2011).

Teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy is defined as the confidence a teacher exhibits when he/she believes he/she has the ability to influence student learning (Guskey & Passaro, 1994).

Teacher retention. Ingersoll, Merrill, and May (2012) define teacher retention as teachers who remain in the education system; regardless of moving to a different school or school district.

Organization of the Study

The following outlines the organization of the study.

Chapter 1. The first chapter consists of the introduction to the research problem. In this chapter, the following sections are addressed: background of the study, statement of the problem, the research issue, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, purpose of the study, research questions, rationale of the study, assumptions associated with the study, the establishment of scope, delimitations and definitions for key study terms.

Chapter 2. The second chapter provides a review of the literature. In this chapter, the following sections are included: insights into teacher preparation, the five phases of first year teaching, factors contributing to teacher attrition, mentoring aspect of comprehensive induction programs, the New Teacher Center's Mentor-Based Induction Program and the review of a three-year study on the impact of comprehensive induction programs on teacher retention.

Chapter 3. The third chapter describes the methodology utilized to develop the research questions and hypotheses. It consists of explaining the framework that preceded the study and influenced the study's progression from beginning to end. The following elements will be discussed: the purpose of the study, research design, research questions and hypotheses, variables, population and sampling plan, research instruments, the procedure used for data collection, ethical considerations, the methods used during data analysis, and the methodology for evaluating the research.

Chapter 4. The fourth chapter provides a summary of analyses through data reduction and descriptive analyses. In addition, the results for each of the research

questions are provided, along with specific quotes from the focus group as a means to substantiate the quantitative data.

Chapter 5. The fifth and final chapter presents the summary and discussion of results organized by each research question. Implications for practice and recommendations for future research are also included.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the SDPBC's induction program on teacher retention. At the time of this study, the district had two types of programs in place for beginning teachers: school-based mentor induction and full-release mentor induction. Although there was little empirical evidence on the impact comprehensive induction programs have on attracting, developing, and retaining beginning teachers (National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 2009) the researcher has composed a literature review of factors surrounding the topic of teacher attrition and retention. In addition, the researcher provides a detailed background of the mentor-based induction program the SDPBC adopted, and the most recent research on comprehensive induction programs. The researcher anticipates the results from this study aiding administrators in devising induction programs that not only support teacher retention, but also impact student performance.

In this chapter, the review of literature is divided into the following sections: (a) teacher preparation, (b) the five phases of first year teachers, (c) the factors contributing to teacher attrition, (d) the themes of effective teacher induction, (e) the characteristics of effective induction programs, (f) mentoring as a component of a comprehensive induction program, (g) the New Teacher Center's Mentor-Based Induction Program, (h) the impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction – First Year Study (2005-2006), (i) the impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction – Second Year Study (2006-2007), (j) the

impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction – Year 3 and 4: Final Study (2007-2009), and (k) the conclusion.

Teacher Preparation

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2011), the selection criteria for entry into undergraduate teacher education programs vary throughout the United States and within higher education institutions. In some states, students may begin taking coursework within their major upon enrolling in the institutions. In other states, prospective students are required to complete two years of general education or liberal arts courses and then apply into the program. This last example is the exception, not the rule. For the most part, the requirements for entry into these programs are a minimum grade point average, passing a basic skills test, letters of recommendations, interviews, and/or experience working with children (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2011). Once the admission requirements are met and the prospective student is accepted, they are enrolled in programs designed to prepare them to meet the professional demands of the classroom.

Throughout the nation, teacher preparation programs are under pressure to address certain inadequacies found in their students' preparation for their own classrooms. The disparity between what is taught in teacher education programs and what teachers experience once they enter their own classrooms has led to increased number of studies focused on teacher preparation programs. These studies reveal the lack of teacher preparedness for the realities they face during their first year in the profession. A study by Melnick and Meister (2008) reports that simulated classrooms and inadequate field experience do little to provide teachers with the essentials needed to be successful in their

own classrooms. “Field placement in an urban school, training in multicultural awareness, and effective recruitment and screening of teacher candidates are the only three strategies with any real support in the research – and of these three, field placement is the most commonly mentioned” (Allen, 2003, p. 5). Once students graduated from these programs, their hopes of receiving continued support from their university well into their first two years in the profession became shattered (Murshidi et al., 2006).

Transition to the classroom. When teachers first enter the classroom, many of them have not received the professional development that would support them in developing the necessary skills to meet professional standards. According to a study conducted by Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009), although teachers in the U.S. participated in workshops and short-term professional development events at similar levels to teachers in other nations, they were limited in opportunities to participate in extended learning experiences (learning that occurs beyond the school day) and productive collaborative communities that would support them in their pedagogical practices. “This type of intense, collaborative, content-rich, and practice-focused professional learning, which leads to better student outcomes, is not typical in U.S. schools and districts” (Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010, p. 1). With regards to professional development, teachers were often overwhelmed with responsibilities and duties that detracted from their much needed planning opportunities with colleagues. The amount of hours spent planning independently along with assigned duties (i.e. lunchroom duty, hall duty, etc.) did little to support the teacher in growing as a collaborative professional.

Five Phases of First Year Teaching

Ellen Moir, Executive Director of the New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz, (Moir, 2011) described the five phases almost all first year teachers experience (see Figure C):

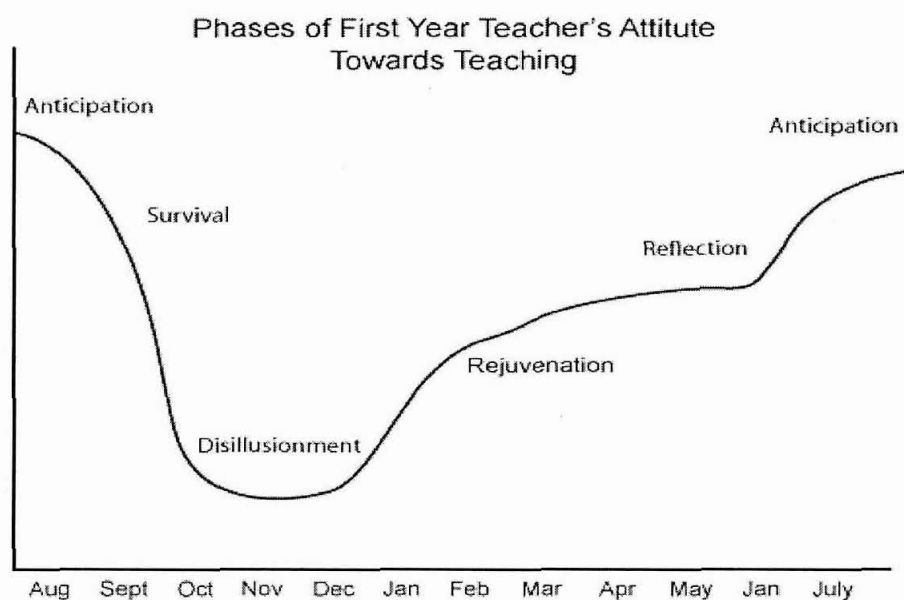


Figure C. Five Phases of First Year Teaching. Permission granted by New Teacher Center to display copyrighted work.

The five phases from the Moir (2011) study are anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation and reflection. Each phase is described in detail below.

- Anticipation phase – occurs during student teaching, when pre-service preparation takes place. As student teachers approach completion of their pre-service duties, they anticipate making the transition from students to having students of their own. The overarching goal in this phase is to make a difference in students' lives.

- Survival phase – occurs during the first month of classroom teaching. Most teachers become overwhelmed with not only the workload demands, but also the unanticipated problems and situations occurring each day on the job. With minimal time left to reflect on their practice, new teachers spend a great deal of hours on schoolwork (i.e. grading and planning). Due to the need to develop their lessons for the first time, beginning teachers focus on how to meet their students' needs utilizing their allotment of available resources in contrast to veteran teachers who have the option to reuse effective lessons and units from the past.
- Disillusionment phase – occurs after six to eight weeks of nonstop work and stress. This phase varies among new teachers. Many teachers become ill during this phase due to stress. At this time, they realize that their dreams of creating an impact on students may be deferred, and as a result, begin to develop a low self-esteem. Classroom management is a major issue during this phase as novice teachers focus more on curriculum than on discipline. Family members and friends seem to be less understanding of the issue, and as a result, teachers tend to feel alone. It is at this time when they begin to question their career choice.
- Rejuvenation phase – characterized by a slow rise in the new teacher's attitude toward teaching. Occurs in January, after winter break when teachers have the opportunity to organize and plan curriculum. The time off allows for a broader perspective with renewed hope. Many beginning teachers are relieved to have made it this far and are eager to begin the second semester with a new outlook.
- Reflection phase – occurs in May as beginning teachers begin to reflect on the school year. Teachers have a sense of how they would like to start the following

school year based on successes and failures, and begin to plan accordingly as they look forward to beginning the new year.

Comprehensive induction programs support new teachers as they make their way through different phases during the school year. Without the emotional and instructional support provided by mentors, most teachers found themselves overwhelmed with the task of trying to survive. If a new teacher's feelings of inadequacy continued into the reflection stage, it may be a determining factor in his/her ultimate decision to remain in the profession.

Factors Contributing to Teacher Attrition

“Overwhelmed, hectic, isolated, beaten down, unsupported, scared, humiliated, afraid, stressed, and drowning” were some of the words used to describe the feelings of first year teachers as they execute their duties as teaching professionals (Anhorn, 2008, p. 15). With the expectation that beginning teachers complete tasks similar to their veteran colleagues, while also getting acclimated to the profession, many experience burnout. As a result, many have chosen to leave rather than damage their reputation any further. According to a study by Yarrow (2009), 40% of America's K-12 teachers appeared to be disheartened and disappointed about their jobs. Feelings of discontent and disrespect have led to an increase in teacher turnover which is significantly higher than the attrition rate of any other occupation (Ingersoll, 2002). The instances of beginning teachers being overwhelmed by their workloads increased when they were assigned some of the most challenging students (Melnick & Meister, 2008), experienced a lack of guidance and resources for lesson planning, and/or taught in unsupportive work environments (Fry, 2007).

Despite the disparities between the experience of those who leave the profession and those who choose to stay, studies have shown that the United States produces more than enough teachers to meet its needs, regardless of the attrition rate due to retirement. School systems facing challenges in finding well-qualified teachers has often been confused with the teacher shortage dilemma (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007). As a result, the public believed that there was a teacher shortage crisis in the U.S. when, in truth, this was not the case at all. According to Barnes et al. (2007), national teacher preparation programs responded vigorously to the increased demand for teachers with more universities adopting teacher preparation programs, and producing more graduates. Within the last decade, institutions with teacher preparation programs increased to approximately 2,050 (USDOE, 2011), with the annual number of graduates with bachelors and masters degrees in education up 29% and 43%, respectively (Feistritzer, 2011). Therefore the crisis was not a teacher shortage. The true crisis that existed was teachers leaving the profession before having any significant impact on student achievement.

In determining the causal factor behind teacher attrition, a study by Ingersoll (2003a) indicated the “graying workforce” has only accounted for a small portion of the total turnover as a result of retirement. The greatest challenge faced by schools was not the increasing rate of retirement, but rather the massive number of teachers who moved from school to school or abandoned their positions (Cook & Engel, 2006). Research conducted by Cook and Engel found that the highest rate of attrition was among younger teachers and those with less experience. The attrition rate was even higher in urban schools and schools serving low-income and minority students.

Although the problem of teacher attrition affected all of America's schools, its impact was more noticeable in lower income schools. According to Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin (2004), schools that served large numbers of academically disadvantaged African American or Hispanic students lost the greatest number of teachers on a yearly basis. These schools lacked the most basic requirements for successful teaching and learning, i.e., adequate facilities, textbooks, instructional materials, availability of technology, etc. As a result, they had a higher attrition rate than schools that were better equipped with facilities and resources that support teaching and learning. Data from the USDOE (Keigher, 2010) reported the overall turnover rate for public school teachers in 2008-2009 was 15.6% of that amount 7.6% transferred to a different school ("the movers") and 8.0% left the profession ("the leavers"). In city schools, 8.0 and 7.5% were movers and leavers, respectively; in suburban communities percentages were respectively 7.5 and 8.3% and, finally in rural communities the percentages were 7.2 and 8.4% respectively (see Figure D).

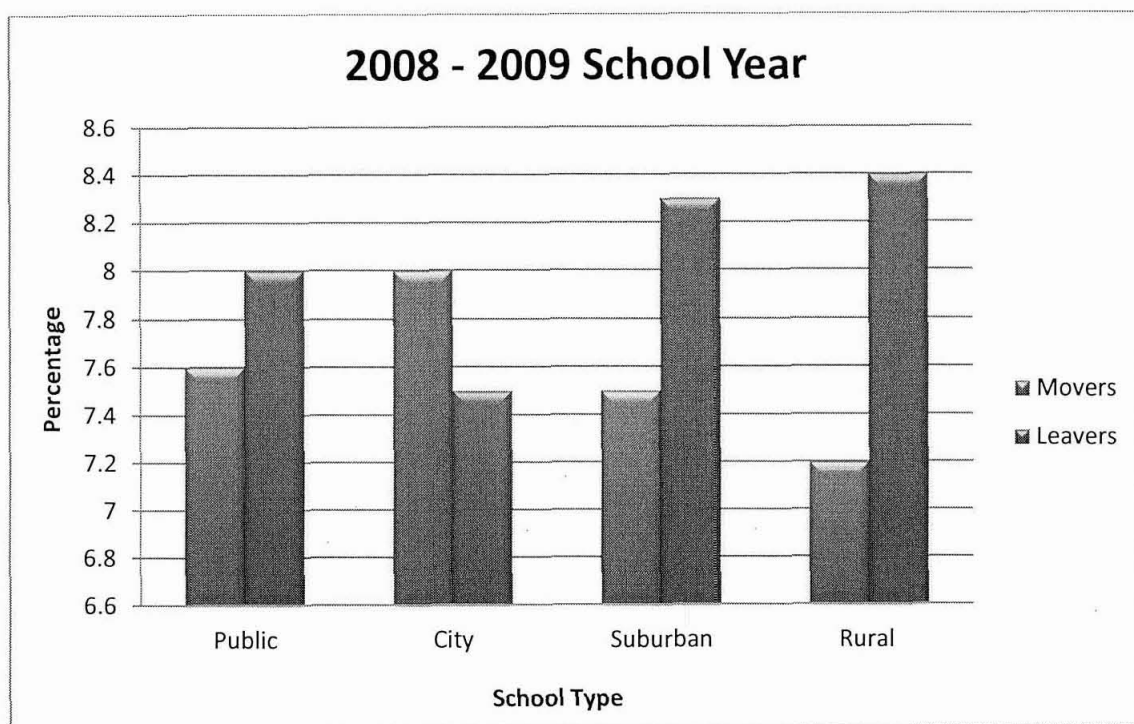


Figure D. Attrition rate of the U.S. public, city, suburban, and rural schools from the 2008-2009 school year.

In determining the profile of teachers who were more prone to leaving the profession at an early rate, studies have shown that most effective teachers remained in the profession longer in comparison to less effective teachers (Chait & Miller, 2009). Although it was not clear whether high-poverty schools had less effective teachers overall, those who stayed longer were those who established efficacy in the early years of the profession. Despite these findings, the literature has also shown that the more effective teachers were likely to remain in the profession, but moved to schools where low socio-economic status (SES) was not an issue. In addition, teachers of different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds were more likely to leave schools with high minority enrollment as they preferred to be with students who shared an ethnic or cultural affinity.

Studies have also shown that teachers with strong academic credentials were more likely to leave the teaching profession overall due to their discontent with the profession and increased opportunities to obtain jobs that offer more financial rewards and/or were less stressful (Stinebrickner, 2001, 2002; Podgursky, Monroe, & Watson, 2004).

Many novice teachers, unaware of the complexities within the teaching profession, realized that their perceptions of the profession and the reality often did not correspond. According to Murshidi, Konting, Elias, and Fooi (2006), “when beginning teachers enter[ed] the teaching force, they often encounter[ed] a reality shock as they confront[ed] the complexity of the teaching task. The reality of the actual teaching situation sometimes differ[ed] so much from what the beginners were expecting” (p. 266). As a result, the revolving door of the teaching profession continued to have a large flow of teachers “passing in, through, and out of schools each year” (Ingersoll, 2003a, p. 11) with the intent of never returning.

Characteristics of Effective Induction Programs

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), in its 2001 policy brief entitled *Beginning Teacher Induction: The Essential Bridge*, cited a lack of support as being the prevailing reason why beginning teachers left the profession prematurely. In addition, it concluded that comprehensive induction programs had a more positive impact on teacher quality and retention if all beginning teachers, regardless of licensure, were participants of a program lasting at least one year, were assigned qualified mentors, received a reduced teaching load, and as a requirement for licensure were involved in a summative review, to be conducted by the mentor

Due to the nation's inconsistencies in induction programs, researchers have yet to find an induction program comprising of all of the above mentioned criteria within the United States (Wang, Tregidgo, & Mifsud, 2002). Despite the continued efforts by policymakers to outline the types of support that are necessary to meet beginning teachers' needs, a lack of substantive research has left many unconvinced that a comprehensive induction program would yield the benefits of retaining teachers and impacting student performance. The wide variety of induction program models across the United States has made it difficult for researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of the design and desired outcomes.

The results of the 2008 report titled, *Impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction: Results from the first year of a Randomized Controlled Study*, which evaluated the impact of 17 school districts' comprehensive induction programs on classroom practices, student achievement, and teacher mobility, found no significant differences in the three variables mentioned. Further analysis of the study revealed the difficulty in drawing "useful generalizations about induction from these results, since both the treatment and comparison groups received substantial support, and there was so much variability in the participation of those who were in the program under study that a common treatment was lacking" (Wei et al. 2009, p. 17). Due to the reluctance of policymakers to enforce a uniform induction model across the United States, many studies on comprehensive induction programs exhibit inconsistencies as they are compared to other programs.

Throughout school districts in the United States, the essential components of induction programs varied in both longevity and the type of support provided. For the

most part, induction programs offered mentoring and professional development for first year teachers. Some school districts provided full-release mentors to work exclusively with beginning teachers, while others appointed classroom teachers to support novice teachers. The professional development workshops and training sessions, although varied across districts and states, consistently offered beginning teachers opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, on and off campus.

Based on data collected from the School and Staffing Survey, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) developed three levels of induction:

Level 1: Beginning teachers are assigned a mentor and received supportive communication with their administrators.

Level 2: Beginning teachers received Level 1 induction in addition to seminars and collaboration with other teachers on instruction.

Level 3: Beginning teachers received Level 2 induction in addition to access to an external teacher network, a teacher's aide, and reduced teaching time.

According to their research, only 56% of new teachers received Level 1 support, 29% received Level 2 support, and less than 1% received Level 3 support (see Figure E).

Further studies showed a predicted probability of attrition for those not receiving any induction support to be at 41%; for those receiving Level 1 induction support at 39% (with the observed demonstrating an 18% probability of leaving the profession and 21% probability of moving to another school or district); those receiving Level 2 support at 27% (with the observed demonstrating a 12% probability of leaving the profession and 15% probability of moving to another school or district); and, those receiving Level 3 support to be at 18% (with the observed demonstrating a 9% probability of leaving the

profession and a 9% probability of moving to another school or district) (see Figure F).

The increase in level of induction support demonstrated a positive effect on the likelihood of teachers remaining in their schools and the profession for a longer period.

The mentoring component, while used as a structured support in many induction programs, is questioned by scholars for not supporting reform-minded teaching practices (Cochran-Smith & Paris, 1995; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000). According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2000), many mentoring programs fell short of their potential as a result of failing to realize that they must be integrated with policy and practices required to transform the teaching profession. The mentor's role in guiding beginning teachers must be to serve as a support agent of strong professional collaborative cultures that are developed to positively impact student performance. In addition, the mentor should be considered a support system for beginning teachers new to the profession and experienced teachers who were new to the school or district.

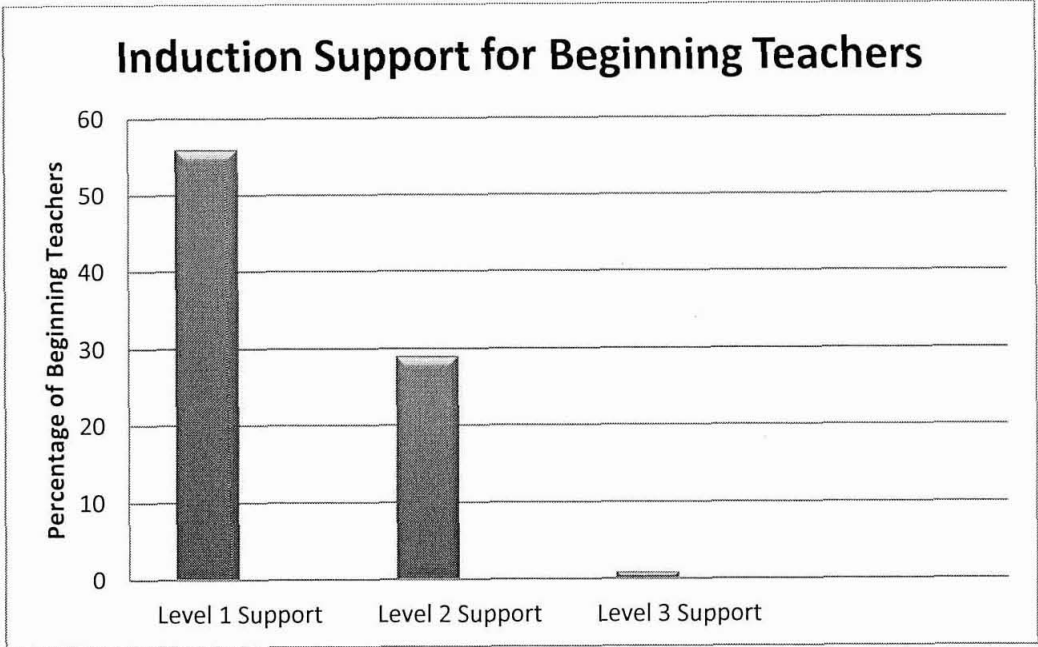


Figure E. Type of induction support received by beginning teachers in the U.S. according to the 2004 School and Staffing Survey.

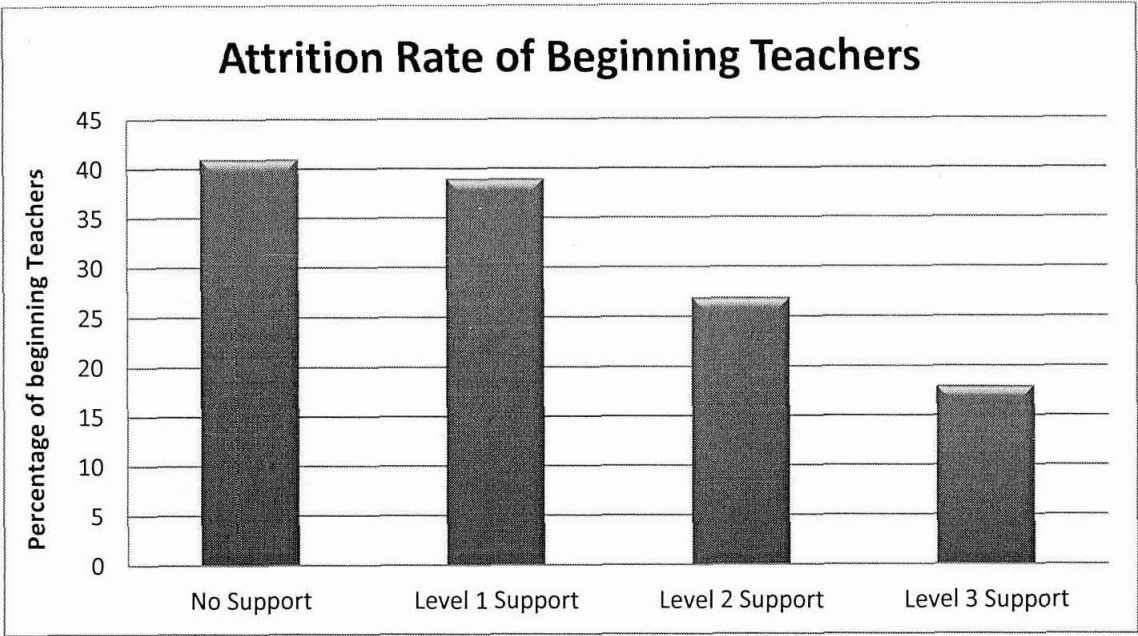


Figure F. Smith’s and Ingersoll’s (2004) prediction of the attrition rate of beginning teachers according to the level of induction support they receive.

Mentoring

Herzberg's theory (1966) of job satisfaction stated that an individual's decision to remain in his/her profession was likely to be influenced by intrinsic factors or motivators, such as efficacy and extrinsic factors or "hygienes," such as support from a mentor.

Levinson (1986) and Shulz's (1995) theories of life structure substantiated the importance of mentor-protégé relationships as a means to influence adult development through different phases of work and socialization. High quality mentoring supported by a school and its district provided the opportunity for mentors to interact with their mentees and build strong relationships that would not only impact teacher effectiveness and efficacy, but would also improve student outcomes (Moir, Barlin, Gless, & Miles, 2009). These aspects of the mentor-protégé relationship may have influence on a teacher's decision to remain in the profession.

The growing number of induction and mentoring programs also supported an increased interest in empirical research on the impact of mentor-based programs on the lives of teachers and their students. Studies have shown trained mentors were more likely to positively affect teacher performance in ways that would impact student achievement (Brown & Wambach, 1987; Chen & Brown, 1992; Fuller, 2003; Fletcher, Strong, & Villar, 2008). While this evidence substantiated the positive impact of quality mentoring on retention and job satisfaction for many state policymakers, it did not convince everyone. In the discussion about the possibility of mandating mentoring programs as a means to satisfy accountability goals, there were still those who continued to question whether the high costs associated with devising a comprehensive induction program that included quality mentoring would be beneficial in the long run (Mullen, 2011).

Research conducted by Villar and Strong (2007) on comprehensive induction programs indicated the rate of return for a comprehensive model of new teacher induction after a five-year period “demonstrated that induction returns extend[ed] far beyond mere retention questions” (p. 14). By implementing the New Teacher Project mentor-based induction program in a California suburban school district, the researchers were able to determine its effectiveness by measuring student gains on the annual achievement test. The study found that “classes taught by the new teachers in the comprehensive mentoring program showed reading gains that were equivalent to the gains in classes taught by more experienced teachers despite being assigned to classrooms that had lower achievement and higher representation of English Language Learners” (Villar & Strong, 2007, p. 9). The study found that beginning teachers who had completed a district-wide induction program had a 92% retention rate and an 8% attrition rate over a period of four years, while the nation’s retention rate was 76%, with an attrition rate of 24% for the same period of time. With turnover costs varying according to the experiential level of the teacher leaving, Villar and Strong (2007) determined the cost of attrition to be 50% of a new teacher’s salary. Overall the study seems to indicate that mentor-based induction programs yield a significant return to society.

Villani (2009) further suggests that the ability of mentors to play a pivotal role in supporting beginning teachers depends on the amount of time, resources, and parameters they are afforded. The levels of guidance and support provided by mentors consist of, but are not limited to, the following:

- Contacting the new teacher at the point of hiring in order to help set up their classroom;

- Familiarizing teachers with the school culture, district policies and procedures;
- Meeting weekly to discuss school expectations and events;
- Discussing state teaching standards and curriculum frameworks;
- Initiating and participating in collaborative coaching cycles; which includes planning, observations, and data collection as requested by the teacher;
- Participating in reflective conversations in order to promote the new teacher's reflection on practice;
- Providing opportunities to observe veteran teachers;
- Establishing and utilizing a tool for assessment of instruction;
- Role-playing events to get teachers prepared to participate in activities such as parent conferences, formal teacher evaluations, etc.;
- Collaborating on lesson planning, action research, or a school event;
- Modeling best practices; and,
- Introducing teachers to colleagues, organizations, and professional development beyond the school.

In addition, mentors assume the responsibility of promoting their mentees' cultural proficiency. When beginning teachers are unfamiliar with their students' cultural diversity, they can sometimes misinterpret their students' behavior and this lack of understanding can become an obstacle to classroom success. The mentor's role is to ensure that teachers are provided strategies that support them in addressing possible failures in communication and understanding (Villani, 2009). Mentors provide emotional

support and encouragement for beginning teachers by establishing trust and rapport as a means to building a positive presupposition of the teacher's worth and good intentions. Teachers, having experienced the disillusionment phase after two months on the job, are in need of as much emotional support as possible in order to feel valued. Without words of encouragement, many teachers walk away from the profession without giving coming back a second thought (Villani, 2009).

As mentors engage in collaborative coaching with their partners, growth is experienced by both parties. Collaborative coaching allows the beginning teacher and his/her mentor to heighten their effectiveness through thoughtful reflection on practice (Villani, 2009). The process of collaborative coaching includes a pre-conference observation in which the mentor and their mentee discuss the lesson to be observed. It is at this time that the beginning teacher informs the mentor of the data he/she would like to be collected. Upon completion of the observation, the mentor and teacher partake in a post-observation conference in which the teacher is able to reflect on his/her practice through guided questions provided by the mentor. The norms of behavior established through the collaborative process do not only provide support to new teachers, they also provide needed support for teachers with experience who are new to the school and/or district. According to a study by Joyce and Showers (2002), the benefits of having collaborative coaching that involves the study of theory, demonstration, and practice supports the development of teachers' pedagogical skills in the classroom at a greater rate than those who were without this type of coaching.

New Teacher Center mentor-based induction program. When employed at high-needs schools, beginning teachers tend to receive limited support and are left to figure out the task of meeting professional standards on their own. As the beginning teachers struggle to establish an efficient and effective approach, the students that they serve suffer. Many of these children have been assigned multiple new teachers and as a result, they fall further below their proficiency levels. These students are at a disadvantage because they lack a support system to help them make significant academic gains.

Her understanding of the underlying mechanisms at work in high-needs schools led to Moir(2011) and her colleagues to develop the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (NTP), a program that would eventually gain recognition for its impact on the educational system. Ten years later, Moir and seven colleagues transformed the original program into the New Teacher Project, a mentor-based teacher induction model. This model helped novices not only survive their initial years in the profession, but also supported the pedagogical growth of confident and skilled professionals” (Kepp, 2009). NTP later matured into a center, operating as an organization within the University of California at Santa Cruz. In order to serve its national clients, the New Teacher Center (NTC) began operating as an independent non-profit organization that supported over 7,500 mentors who helped to improve the effectiveness of 25,000 teachers, plus 3,500 new and experienced principals across the United States. NTC currently works with 35 states and approximately 250 school districts, including the SDPBC; a reach that allows them to impact approximately 1.5 million students in one year’s time (New Teacher Center, 2011).

NTC stands on the premise that high quality mentoring and induction practices are necessary to ensure that beginning teachers are provided the opportunity to be successful in their first two years of teaching. In its efforts to increase the standards at which induction programs were able to positively impact teacher performance and retention, NTC works diligently with school districts to provide them with their program's operational framework. The following highlights the criteria under which mentors are able to support beginning teachers, as part of their comprehensive induction program (New Teacher Center, 2007):

- Mentor selection: Qualities include, but are not limited to, evidence of outstanding teaching practice, strong intra- and inter-personal skills, experience with adult learners, respect for peers, and current knowledge of professional development.
- Ongoing professional development and support for mentors: Mentors receive ongoing training and professional development to support beginning teacher.
- Weekly mentor meetings: Mentors meet at least once a week for professional development to develop the skills to novice teachers need to ultimately support themselves.
- Sanctioned time for mentor-teacher interaction: Mentors meet with beginning teachers for at least 1 to 2.5 hours per week. This is considered protected time by teachers and administrators.
- Multi-year mentoring: Mentoring takes place for at least two years, the second year of which focuses on intense pedagogical practices. The time

spent with beginning teachers during the second year is decreased from approximately 90 minutes to 60 minutes a week.

- Intensive and specific guidance to move the teaching practice forward: Mentors utilize professional teaching standards and content area standards to support the instructional growth that will improve beginning teachers' practice.
- Professional teaching standards and data-driven conversations: Mentors collect data during their observations of beginning teachers' lessons. Conversations that take place between the mentor and his/her beginning teachers are data-driven as they relate to teaching standards. Formative assessment tools are used to document conversations and collect data to ensure continuous professional growth.
- Ongoing beginning teacher professional development: Beginning teachers are provided the opportunity to participate in regularly scheduled seminars and online learning communities in order to build a network for professional dialogue and reflection, as well as to eliminate the fear of isolation.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for administrators: Professional development is provided for administrators to ensure that they are aware of their roles in setting the stage for the success of beginning teachers and their mentors.
- Collaboration with all stakeholders: Strong communication and collaboration among stakeholders is key to ensuring the success of

beginning teachers as it creates a culture of commitment on the part of administration, schools boards, union/association leadership, and professional partners.

The Impact of Comprehensive Teacher Induction – First Year Study (2005-2006)

In determining the impact of NTC's comprehensive induction programs on teacher retention and other positive outcomes for teachers and students, the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEERA) within the USDOE's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) partnered with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) to evaluate the impact of structured and intensive teacher induction programs in comparison to district- provided induction programs. The five research questions that were the focus of the study were as follows (Glazerman, Dolfen, Bleeker, Johnson, Isenberg, Lugo-Gil, Grider, & Britton, 2008, p. viii):

1. What was the effect of comprehensive teacher induction on the type and intensity of induction services teachers receive as compared to the services they receive from the districts' current induction programs?
2. What was the impact on teachers' classroom practices?
3. What was the impact on student achievement?
4. What was the impact on teacher retention?
5. What was the impact on the composition of the district's teaching workforce?

Prior to conducting the study, researchers found a need to define the components of a comprehensive induction as:

- Carefully selected and trained full-time mentors;

- Intensive curriculum and structured support for beginning teachers that includes an orientation;
- Professional development opportunities;
- Weekly meetings with mentors;
- Instructional focus with opportunities for novice teachers to observe experienced teachers;
- Formative assessment tools that permit evaluation of practice on an ongoing basis and require observations and constructive feedback; and,
- Outreach to district and school-based administrators to educate them about program goals and to garner their systemic support for the program.

The two comprehensive induction programs that were used for the NPR study were the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey (ETS) and the New Teacher Center at the University of California-Santa Cruz (NTC). These programs consisted of the required components set forth by the research conducted and were also comparable in structure. Four hundred and eighteen schools in 17 school districts, each serving low-income students in which 50% qualified for the federal School Lunch Program, participated in the study that encompassed 13 states. The 698 beginning teachers eligible to participate in the study were elementary school core subject teachers (K-6) who were not currently receiving induction support from a teacher preparation or certification program.

Mentor characteristics consisted of having a minimum of five years of teaching experience in elementary school, being recognized as an exemplary teacher, and having experience in providing professional development or mentoring other teachers. Selected

mentors participated in four training sessions lasting two to three days each. The first session took place in the summer prior to the start of the school year; while the remaining sessions spanned the school year. Training consisted of exposing mentors to upcoming professional development sessions and gradually introducing them to the processes of mentor/mentee work (i.e. reflecting on instructional practices and analyzing student work). In addition, mentors were trained in utilizing tools and protocols to support beginning teachers within a formative assessment evaluation system. Each mentor was assigned 12 beginning teachers with a caseload that ranged from eight to 14 teachers over the school year.

Weekly meetings took place with treatment teachers (those who were part of the two-year induction program) for approximately two hours in which the activities revolved around induction support. Mentors were also inclined to exercise professional judgment in selecting activities they felt would move the teacher's practice forward, such as, observing instruction, modeling lessons, reviewing lesson plans, utilizing instructional materials, examining student work and interacting with students. The sample population would attend monthly professional development sessions to complement their interactions with their mentors, in addition to observing veteran teachers during the school year. ETS districts even offered monthly study groups that were facilitated by mentors. Upon completion of the school year, treatment teachers would gather to celebrate the year's success and teacher's professional growth.

The study drew the following conclusions:

1. There was a positive impact based on induction support received. Treatment teachers (those supported by NTC mentors) reported that they received more mentoring than control teachers. Treatment teachers were observed longer than control teachers (26 minutes in comparison to 11 minutes); observed mentors modeling longer lessons (11 minutes versus seven minutes); and, had more one-on-one contact with mentors. In addition, more time was spent on certain professional activities than control teachers. Teacher efficacy increased in treatment teachers as opposed to control teachers (those not supported by NTC mentors).
2. What was the impact on teachers' classroom practices? There was no impact on teacher practices during the first year. Utilizing a Likert scale containing 16 indicators, the study revealed there were no statistically significant differences between treatment and control teachers' performances on the implementation of a literacy lesson, development of the content of the literacy lesson, and establishment of a classroom culture.
3. What was the impact on student achievement? Utilizing the district's standardized achievement test to aggregate test scores, researchers found none of the differences in reading and math scores to be significantly different (after applying the Benjamin-Hochberg method to control the false discovery rate among rejected hypotheses).
4. What was the impact on teacher retention? Researchers found no statistically significant impact on teacher retention for treatment or control teachers. Teacher

retention was measured by the percentage of teachers who remained in the schools in which they were hired, their district, and the profession.

5. What was the impact on the composition of the district's teaching workforce?

Comprehensive induction programs that produce a difference in the characteristics of teachers who decide to return to the district can impact the composition of the teaching workforce. When teachers leave the district the average qualifications of teachers who remain begin to change between the treatment and control groups. Researchers found no positive impact between the treatment and control groups in regards to their observed classroom practices, their effect on student achievement, and their professional characteristics, SAT/ACT scores and advanced degrees.

The Impact of Comprehensive Teacher Induction – Second Year Study (2006-2007)

Due to the lack of statistical significance found in the one-year study of comprehensive induction programs, the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEERA), in collaboration with Mathematica Policy Research (MPR), extended their research to encompass a three-year time period. Utilizing the same 17 school districts across 13 states, for a total of 418 low-income elementary schools with 50 % or more of their students qualifying for the federal School Lunch Program, the researchers continued the study by evaluating the impact of two-year comprehensive induction programs. Ten school districts received one year of induction support as the control group, while the remaining seven districts received two years of induction support as part of the treatment group. The two-year study provided researchers with data to help them determine whether two years of a comprehensive induction program would be more

beneficial to beginning teachers than a one-year program. Of the five original research questions, only four were used for this study. Since researchers did not return to observe teachers in their second year, the question pertaining to classroom practices was not addressed.

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) and New Teacher Center (NTC) districts participating in the study as part of the treatment group adapted the curricula of their induction programs to reflect the application of induction services over the two-year period. Over the course of the two-year period, treatment teachers received support similar to that described in the first year study. Mentors who worked with these teachers received additional professional development to support their teachers. During year two, the ETS program brought mentors together for a total of eight days over three sessions and NTC mentors met for 10 days over four sessions for trainings that were similar to year one. Two issues that were related to the programs' implementation were the treatment teachers' participation in the professional development sessions and the atypical models that were being utilized in the study as these were not necessarily models that would have been delivered outside the study context. After two years of induction support, the summary of findings was as follows (Isenberg et. al, 2009):

1. The amount of mentoring for two-year induction programs showed statistically significant differences in comparison to one-year induction programs. The activities and assistance received by treatment teachers also showed statistically significant differences between both groups.
2. What was the impact on student achievement? There was no statistically significant difference found in student test scores of the school districts that

implemented a two-year comprehensive induction program. Data from reading and math assessments did not yield any significant difference between the treatment and control teachers' groups.

3. Based on the percentage of teachers who remained in their originally assigned school, district, and profession for two years as part of the two-year comprehensive induction program, there was no statistically significant difference in retention.
4. What was the impact on the composition of the district's teaching workforce? Exposure to two years of comprehensive induction had no statistically significant difference in student achievement outcomes or the professional background characteristics of those who chose to remain in the district.

Impact of Comprehensive Teacher Induction – Year 3 and 4: Final Results

Utilizing data from teacher surveys, classroom observations, and student achievement from teachers with one to two years of comprehensive induction support, researchers from the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEERA), in collaboration with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR), extended their research with a follow-up study for treatment and control teachers during their third and fourth year in the profession. During the third and fourth years of teaching, treatment and control teachers were no longer exposed to induction support as the intervention ceased in the 17 school districts. The results were as follows (Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfen, Bleeker, Johnson, Grider, & Jacobus, 2010:

1. What was the effect of a comprehensive teacher induction program on the types and intensity of services received by teachers during the program in

comparison to the services they receive from the districts' current induction programs after the study's induction program ended? Within the third and fourth years when the study's induction program ceased for all districts, there were similar levels of support for treatment and control teachers.

2. What was the impact on student achievement during the third and fourth years of the study? For districts that provided one year of induction support for teachers, the impact on math and reading scores in the third year showed no significant differences. The two-year districts showed positive and statistically significant differences in math and reading scores. Two-year districts showed that support received from comprehensive induction "led to an increase in test scores of 11% of a standard deviation in reading, which is enough to move the average student from the 50th percentile up four percentile points, and an increase of 20% of a standard deviation in math scores, enough to move the average student up eight percentile points" (Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfen, Bleeker, Johnson, Grider, & Jacobus, 2010, p. xxxi).
3. What were the impacts on teacher mobility and attitudes relating to their career decisions?

Teacher attitudes relating to their career decisions: Treatment and control teachers reported similar feelings of satisfaction and preparedness; being exposed to a comprehensive induction program did not make the treatment teacher more satisfied or prepared than control teachers.

Teacher mobility: Treatment teachers' decisions to remain in their schools, districts, or profession were linked to being exposed to a comprehensive

induction program. There were no significant differences between treatment and control group mobility patterns.

4. What was the impact on the composition of the district's teaching workforce?

When investigating the impact of comprehensive induction programs on the composition of the district's teaching workforce, there were similar levels of professional qualifications for treatment and control teachers who remained in their school districts for the four years. There were no statistical significant differences between treatment stayers and control stayers (Glazerman et al., 2010).

In addition to the aforementioned research questions, researchers conducted correlational analyses on induction support and student achievement, and race/ethnicity matching and grade. Results showed that the intensity of the induction support yielded a more positive attitude for treatment teachers, with regards to efficacy. However, these findings did not translate into better retention. Beginning teachers who had mentors of similar race/ethnicity or taught the same grade level had lower retention rates in the district and profession than those who were not matched based on this criteria. In addition, teacher attitudes and student achievement was not impacted by either factor (Glazerman et al., 2010).

Summary

The literature review within this chapter presented insights into teacher preparation, the five phases of first year teaching, and factors contributing to teacher attrition. The mentoring aspect of comprehensive induction programs was analyzed in regards to the role mentors play in retaining teachers long enough to impact their

practice. The New Teacher Center's Mentor-Based Induction Program was discussed with focus placed on its partnership with the SDPBC and their support for the use of full-release mentors. The review of a three-year study on the impact of two comprehensive induction programs, Santa-Cruz's NTC and Princeton's ETS on teacher retention, classroom practices, and the composition of district teaching workforces were reported. No statistically significant differences were found between treatment and control teachers, until the end of the novice teacher's third year in the profession. Further analysis of this study revealed the difficulty in drawing generalizations about induction programs due to the inconsistencies in support received by program participants nationally. In conclusion, this study further reinforces the need to have a unified induction program across the states in order to determine the level of effectiveness with regards to retention.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The following chapter describes the research methodology used to investigate the impact of the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC)'s mentor-based induction program on teacher retention. This chapter begins by describing the research questions, context of the study, the population and the sampling plan. Then it continues with a description of the research design, data collection procedures, ethical considerations, and the quality of the data before it concludes with the delimitations.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to collect teachers' perceptions of the SDPBC's induction program, the Educator Support Program and its components, and the impact of mentoring as it related to teacher attrition for study participants.

Q1. What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the SDPBC's induction program when they are receiving district-based mentor support versus school-based mentor support?

Q2. To what extent does the SDPBC's Educator Support Program impact teacher retention?

Q3. Based on qualitative focus group data, which component of the SDPBC Educator Support Program did teachers believe to have the greatest impact on teacher retention: district-based mentor support or school-based mentor support?

Context of the Study

This study took place in DA, Correct II schools within the SDPBC. Full-release mentors work in DA, Correct II schools due to the large number of schools qualifying for this type of support. During the 2011-2012 school year, the SDPBC consisted of 173 DA schools of which 71 schools were identified as Correct II (SDPBC, 2012a). During the school year 2011-2012, approximately 1,500 teachers were new to the SDPBC approximately 880 were first year teachers. The district's Department of Professional Development collaborated with its Department of Human Resources to assign mentors to these teachers. Seven full-release mentors were assigned mentoring responsibilities that would support approximately 115 first and second year teachers. The remaining first year teachers were assigned school-based mentors (teachers who served as peer-support within a similar learning environment). The researcher sought to determine which induction program, one with a full-release or school-based mentor, had a greater impact on first and second year teachers' decisions to remain in the profession. The study would also provide feedback on the effectiveness of the district's mentor-based induction program.

The basis of this study was to examine the extent to which high quality mentoring had a positive impact on first and second year teachers' experiences in teaching as they related to two contexts: the support received from their induction program and the likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. In line with this methodology, this study examined the extent to which a mentor-based induction program influenced teacher retention as compared to a school-based induction program which did not have the full-release mentoring component.

Description of Population and Sampling Plan

This study was comprised of individuals of various ages, races, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds in order to not be restrictive. All participants were employed by the SDPBC. The researcher obtained a sample of elementary, middle, and high school teachers in various areas of the county for this study.

Sample population. The researcher utilized a convenience sampling to secure participants for the study. For the quantitative component of the study, the researcher contacted the SDPBC's Human Resource Department manager to obtain a list of beginning teachers in their first and second years of employment. The list consisted of teachers new to the profession as well as those new to the district (both with and without prior teaching experience). The researcher's sampling frame consisted of first and second year teachers. Each teacher was contacted via email with an attached voluntary consent form (see Appendix A) explaining the study. Prior to participating in the study, participants were asked to give consent by selecting "yes" and signing the consent form; thereby gaining access to a link to Qualtrics, an online survey software utilized to collect data. The researcher narrowed the sampling frame to first and second year teachers employed in DA/Correct II schools who had completed the surveys. This method of sampling, known as a convenience sample, was deemed necessary based on the parameters of the study and setting. For the qualitative component of the study, the final group of teachers was chosen through a process of further convenience sampling. Beginning teachers in Title I schools with similar demographics and percentages of free/reduced lunch students were utilized in the final focus group.

Research Design

In the first phase of the sequential explanatory mixed method study, quantitative data took the form of a survey design. The first part of the survey pertained to the beginning teachers' demographic profile: age, race/ethnicity, gender, educational level, teaching contract, and job assignment (Appendix B). In addition, beginning teachers were asked to complete a second section of the survey that consisted of addressing the major components of the district's comprehensive induction program: professional development, mentor support, and teacher evaluation. In the second phase, the researcher collected qualitative data from beginning teachers participating in a focus group. The collection of data from the group took the form of an unstructured interview. The researcher met with eight participants in a permissive, nonthreatening environment to share their perceptions and points of view based on the type of induction support they had received during the school year.

Independent variables. An independent variable, as defined by Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), is a variable that can be controlled or manipulated by the researcher to affect another variable. In this study, the main independent variable of interest was the type of induction program in which the teachers participated. The categories of the SDPBC's induction program were identified as 1) mentor-based, a group that consisted of NTC full-release mentors, ongoing professional development, and a standards-based evaluation program, or 2) school-based, a group that consisted of school-based mentors, ongoing professional development, and a standards-based evaluation program. The difference between the two programs was the type of mentoring support received by beginning teachers.

Dependent variables. Within a study, the dependent variable is measured to determine the effect an independent variable has on it. Specifically, the two variables, the dependent and independent, are observed to establish the strength of their relationship and determine whether the relationship is positive or negative (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). In this study, the dependent variables were identified as the retention rates of two different types of induction programs. The effect of each program on retention was measured based on reports from teachers about their experiences in induction programs. Their responses were quantified by the three main components of the induction survey: professional development, mentor support, and teacher evaluation. The teachers' reports of their desire to stay in the profession and their likelihood to remain in their schools were recorded and compared across programs.

Data Collection

In the first phase of the study, quantitative data took the form of a survey design. Survey research was used to obtain data from the beginning teachers due to its rapid turnaround rate in regards to data collection (Creswell, 2009) as well as accessibility to individuals who may be otherwise difficult to reach due to location, time, and cost (Wright, 2005). The online software program, Qualtrics, was utilized to design and administer the password-protected surveys. Utilizing the list of beginning teachers obtained from the district's Human Resource Department, an email was sent to principals of the schools in which the teachers were assigned to teach. The researcher emailed beginning teachers whose principal consented to having them participate in the study. The email described the study, duration, confidentiality, and procedures in addition to a link to the Qualtrics site that housed the surveys. The estimated time to complete each

survey was 5 minutes. The survey data was entered into the SPSS 20.0 (a statistical analysis and data management software package used to generate tabulated reports, charts, and plots of distribution and trends, descriptive statistics, and conduct complex statistical analyses) and analyzed by the researcher using frequency distribution, measures of central tendency, and independent *t*-tests.

In the second phase, the researcher collected qualitative data from eight beginning teachers using a focus group (see Appendix G). The collection of data from the group took the form of an unstructured interview. According to Creswell (2009), focus group questions are usually unstructured and generally open-ended in order to elicit the views and opinions of participants. The researcher met with participants in a permissive, nonthreatening environment to share their perceptions and points of view based on the type of support they were provided during the school year. Gay and Airasian (2003) reported face-to-face interviews to be beneficial to researchers when they needed to collect in-depth data that may not be as easy to structure in a multiple-choice format. It was anticipated that the interviewees' responses would be more accurate and truthful, as this method allowed them to provide immediate clarification to questions that may not have been easy to express using pen and paper methods. Self-disclosure is considered easier for children to participate in than adults when the factor of trust comes into play (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Adults are usually less inclined to share how they think or feel, especially when they believe they will be judged by others. These concerns are usually due to a lack of trust. In order to alleviate the pressures associated with self-disclosure, the researcher initiated the discussion by citing personal experiences both as a teacher and a

mentor. In doing so, the researcher was able to create an environment where interviewees felt comfortable sharing their experiences throughout the school year.

The procedures for the qualitative data collection were as follows. An invitation was emailed to teachers within the sample who agreed to participate in the study. Ultimately, teacher selection was based on a convenience sample. The focus group consisted of three types of beginning teachers of varying grade levels: those who received full-release mentor support, those who received school-based mentor support, and those who were part of the Alternative Certificate Program (ACP). The group was asked a series of questions on the impact their induction program had on their decision to remain in the profession or make a career change (Appendix G). During the face-to-face interview, the researcher asked open-ended questions and probed the interviewees in order to seek clarification of responses from the surveys. With the participants' consent, the researcher recorded the focus group session. Participants were provided the opportunity to engage in discussions surrounding the following topics:

- Induction Program Description;
- Mentor Component;
- Teacher Evaluation System; and,
- Challenges

Instruments. In this study, a demographic survey, a Beginning Teacher Induction Program Survey (BTIPS), and a focus group interview were utilized for data collection. The first half of the survey, generated by the researcher, covered the demographic profile of beginning teachers in the DA/Correct II schools. The second half of the survey, also generated by the researcher, provided a means to address beginning teachers' perception

of specific components of the induction program, i.e. professional development, mentoring, and teacher evaluation, in relation to teacher retention. The anticipated time to complete each survey was approximately 10 minutes or less. Each survey ensured participant confidentiality through Transport Layer Security encryption, a protocol utilized by many World Wide Web browsers and server applications to protect sensitive data transmitted through the Internet (Chernick, Edington III, Fanto, & Rosenthal, 2005). The focus group interview with beginning teachers from the mentor-based and school-based induction programs took place during after school hours, outside of the school setting to increase the participants' comfort level.

Part 1: Teacher Demographic Profile. The Teacher Demographic Profile was a nine-question demographic survey designed by the researcher in order to obtain data pertaining to the characteristics of each participant. The purpose of the survey was to describe the population and to determine what variables impact teacher retention. The following variables were included in the demographic surveys for beginning teachers:

- Age Range
- Race/Ethnicity
- Gender
- Educational Level
- Graduation from a teacher preparation program
- Enrollment in an AC Program
- Teacher contract
- Teaching Assignment
- School location/District area

Part II: Beginning Teacher Induction Program Survey. The BTIPS is a three-part 32-question survey that includes categorical, dichotomous (yes/no responses), and Likert scale items (see Appendix C) devised to determine the connection between beginning teachers' experiences and the professional development he/she had received throughout the school year, his/her mentor support, and the teacher evaluation system that was utilized at the time to support beginning teachers. The final section of the survey includes items related to the impact of the induction program on teachers' future plans in their job settings and career choices.

Professional development. Teachers often miss out on some of the basic benefits of attending professional development workshops/trainings when they are not able to "make the connection between what they are learning and what they need to do in their schools and classrooms" (Hirsh, 2009, p. 71). The purpose of this section of the survey was to provide insight into how beginning teachers felt about the training sessions they were encouraged to attend by their school administrators. This section also sought to figure out whether they were able to make the connection between the workshops and classroom instruction. The ten questions in this section of the survey addressed the relevance of professional development workshops as they pertained to the subject area(s) taught by the beginning teacher. The beginning teachers were asked about opportunities to attend training sessions off campus that were provided by their administrators. In addition, teachers were asked about the ease of accessing and perusing the district's professional development website in order to seek their own professional development. A needs-assessment was also included in the survey as a proxy measure of teacher efficacy to determine the level of beginning teachers' need for support.

Mentoring. “Because...mentoring can positively affect retention and job satisfaction with the profession, it is being harnessed as a resource to help meet state accountability goals” (Mullen, 2011, p. 64). However, if research shows that mentors lack the expertise in supporting beginning teachers, this component of the induction program would be deemed ineffective. In this nine-question section of the survey, beginning teachers were provided a set of statements in which they were asked to agree or disagree. The responses were on the Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagreeing to strongly agreeing about specific statements. The statements pertained to the amount of time, during the study year, teachers spent with their mentors to plan and analyze student work, the kind of support that was provided by their mentors, the degree of expectations that was established by mentors, and the opportunity, if any, to reflect on their teaching in order to advance their practice.

Teacher evaluation. The third section of the survey covered the teacher evaluation system being utilized by the district. Five statements were provided on a Likert scale pertaining to the knowledge and implementation process of the evaluation system and the support received to further impact teacher practice.

Impact of induction program. In the final section, teachers were invited to comment on the impact that the induction program had on their career decisions for the upcoming school year; whether the induction program supported them in their decision to:

1. Remain in the school in which they were hired,
2. Inquire about teaching positions in other schools, or,
3. Leave the profession entirely and opt for a career change.

Appendix D depicts the constructs of the BTIP survey.

Ethical Considerations

The following steps were taken to ensure ethical considerations were made for each participant:

1. The researcher submitted an application to Lynn University's Instructional Review Board (IRB).
2. The researcher received permission from the SDPBC to conduct research on its induction program, through the Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (see Appendix E).
3. Upon the approval from the SDPBC, the researcher began data collection using the procedures described in the next section.
4. Participants' identities remained confidential throughout the study; there were no identifiers on the survey. Each survey was assigned a number.
5. The results of the responses were reported in Excel software by participant number.
6. The researcher emailed the same group of beginning teachers to determine their interest in being a part of a focus group. In the email, the researcher described the nonthreatening environment in which the focus groups would take place (Appendix H).
7. During the focus groups' interviews, participants were asked for consent to record the meetings. At that time, the meetings were recorded and utilized for transcriptions.

8. The data from the surveys and focus groups were stored confidentially in a locked filing cabinet and will be destroyed after five years.
9. Upon completion of the study, the Lynn University IRB was notified.

Quality of Data

There are two main types of threats to validity that can occur in a study: internal and external threats. An internal validity threat can be categorized by experimental procedures, treatments, or experiences of participants of a study that would cause the researcher to produce erroneous results from data collected from the sample population (Creswell, 2009). External validity threats occur when the researcher draws incorrect generalizations from sample data to other persons or groups. In the following section, the researcher describes threats to validity as they pertained to this study and ways in which the researcher was able to control each of the extraneous variables.

Multiple-treatment interference (external validity). Beginning teachers participating in school-based induction programs may have only had exposure to certain components of their programs; nonetheless, they could have been receiving other types of support from their colleagues and/or family with educational backgrounds. The type of support could have been, but is not limited to, instructional resources and strategies, peer evaluations and teacher observations. As a result, it would be very difficult to determine whether teacher attrition was the result of the induction program. In addition, those participating in mentor-based induction programs may have also been receiving other types of support that would interfere with the programs' integrity; consequently, making it difficult for the researcher to determine the extent to which each program would work in isolation. To ensure that outside factors would not interfere with the data, the

researcher built the variable (additional support) into the design of the study. In the survey questions, participants were asked to disclose any additional support they were receiving and how this support impacted teacher performance and pedagogical practice.

Internal validity. In order to address the validity of the surveys, the researcher solicited the help of instructional specialists and mentors from the SDPBC Professional Development Department to examine the surveys to judge their adequacy as it related to the objectives of the study. The researcher defined the survey parameters and collaborated with the instructional specialists and mentors to review the surveys to ensure content-related evidence of face validity. The surveys were rewritten and resubmitted to the instructional specialists and mentors for approval. This process was repeated until it was ensured that each statement on the surveys was an “adequate representation of the total domain of content covered by the variable being measured” (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. 151). Once they were finalized, the researcher administered the surveys to beginning teachers who were not part of the study in order to determine if the statements/questions in each survey addressed the research questions.

Data Analysis

A quasi-experimental design was used to determine whether there were any differences between teachers who participated in the SDPBC’s mentor-based program and those who participated in a school-based program; specifically, teachers’ induction program experiences, efficacy, and the likelihood of teacher retention. In quasi-experiments, the researcher does not randomly assign participants to control and experimental groups (Creswell, 2009). As in the case of this study, the teachers who participated in either the mentor- or school-based induction programs were designated by

the SDPBC, and thus were not randomly assigned to the two conditions. The collected data was downloaded from Qualtrics in an Excel file and imported into SPSS for analysis. The SPSS 20.0 software was then used to analyze the data.

Descriptive statistics. Prior to the examination of the four research questions, descriptive analyses were conducted. Specifically, data assumptions were examined (i.e., data normality/frequency distributions to detect data anomalies and outliers), means, standard deviations, and ranges were computed, and an analysis was performed of the relation between teacher demographic characteristics and teacher retention.

Reliability of the Beginning Teacher Induction Program Survey (BTIPS). In order to reduce the data to a more manageable form, summary scores were created for components of the BTIPS. As warranted, mean scores of items were calculated within similar construct areas as described below (e.g., items related to efficacy; items related to professional development) and reliability analysis of the resulting summary scores were conducted. Researchers use different evaluation techniques as a means to determine the effectiveness of questions in securing valid responses (Hess, Singer, & Bushery, 1999, p. 346). In order to determine internal consistency of the survey questions, the researcher performed a reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha statistic for all summary scales that were created (i.e., professional development, mentor support, teacher evaluation components, teacher efficacy, and teacher retention).

Analysis of research questions. Q1. What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the SDPBC's induction program when they are receiving mentor-based versus school-based support?

First, items within the component areas of professional development, mentor support, and teacher evaluation were reverse scored, when necessary, so that higher scores represented more positive experiences (i.e., greater satisfaction, greater likelihood of using support structures). Furthermore, not all items within the three induction program component areas were answered on the same rating scale; therefore, items in these sub-scales were standardized before being compiled into their respective summary scores. For example, some items were on a Likert-scale, while others were dichotomous (yes/no). In these instances, all items within the component were first standardized to a mean of zero ($SD = 1$), and then averaged with the other items within that component, allowing all items to be on the same scoring scale. Categorical items were not figured into the scale scores, but were used descriptively to compare the groups of teachers.

The independent variable was the type of induction program (SDPBC's mentor-based program versus a school-based program) and the dependent variables were teachers' experiences with the district's induction program (mentoring, professional development, and teacher evaluation). In order to compare mentor-based to school-based induction programs, an independent *t*-test was conducted where results showed whether there was a significant difference, at a *p*-value of less than .05, in mean scores on the dependent variables of professional development, mentor support, and teacher evaluation between teachers in the mentor-based and school-based programs.

Q2. To what extent does the SDPBC's Educator Support Program impact teacher retention?

An independent *t*-test was used in order to address whether beginning teachers who were part of the SDPBC New Teacher Center's Mentor-Based Program (full-release

mentoring) would have greater likelihood of retention at the completion of their first or second year in comparison to those who were supported by the SDPBC Educator Support Program (school-based mentoring). A summary score was first computed to reflect the impact of the induction program and likelihood of teacher retention ($n = 3$ items). Two of the items were reverse scored (e.g., “If I had the option to change careers I would pursue it”) so that all items represented a more positive impact of the induction program, and thus, greater likelihood of retention.

The independent variable was the type of induction program (SDPBC’s mentor-based program versus a school-based program). The dependent variable was teachers’ reports of retention. An independent t -test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference, at a p -value of less than .05, in mean scores of teachers’ reports of the impact of the induction program on their retention for teachers in the mentor-based as compared to the school-based program.

Q3. Based on qualitative focus group data, which component of the SDPBC Educator Support Program did teachers in the mentor-based and school-based programs believe to have the greatest impact on teacher retention?

Upon the completion of each focus group, the meetings were transcribed and coded. In order to assemble a theoretical narrative that would be utilized to code discussions from the focus group, the following steps were taken (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003):

1. *Identify the big ideas or themes.* By taking repeated direct quotes from participants, the researcher substantiated the big ideas/themes;
2. *Unitize the data.* The researcher placed the direct quotes into categories or codes;

3. The researcher continued to categorize/code the data until all texts were grouped based on the big ideas/themes.

Delimitations

The following section describes the delimitations that could have possibly occurred and/or influenced the results of this study. As a result, the researcher provided ways in which they were addressed as a means to strengthen the study.

Ecological Generalizability. Ecological generalizability refers to the extent to which the study can be generalized under different settings or conditions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). In order to avoid this issue, the sample that was utilized in the qualitative and quantitative designs was taken from Title I schools, in which most first year teachers were provided full-release instructional mentors. In addition, the researcher utilized a sample of beginning teachers from the same Title I schools who were not provided with full-release mentors to ensure consistency among variables. As stated earlier, there were no restrictions for age, gender, race, ethnicity or the educational level of teachers in the SDPBC. Therefore, this study contained a varied sampling of teacher demographics and educational backgrounds.

Participants – Noncompliance. Although beginning teachers are expected to participate in induction programs, there was the possibility that some might not have completed the program with fidelity. The following are examples of noncompliance that could have occurred within this study:

- Beginning teachers may not have attended every professional development workshop, particularly if they believed certain workshops did not pertain to them.

- The ESP contact (Assistant Principal) and/or principal may not have approved beginning teachers' leave of absence to attend professional development trainings as they felt the teachers' time away from students would not support the district's goals in increasing student performance.
- The number of meeting times with mentors may have been altered as a result of beginning teachers' or mentors' absence, conflicting schedules, and/or cancellations.
- Formative assessments, used to support teachers in their pedagogical practice, may not have taken place the number of times required. As a result, teachers may not have had sufficient time to reflect on their practice; which could lead to subpar summative assessments by administrators.

To address these issues, the researcher built each of the above variables into the survey design to ensure that they are addressed in the study. The surveys and questionnaires determined the extent to which the comprehensive induction program was being implemented with fidelity. Each of these variables provided support in substantiating the impact of each component that induction programs had on teacher and student performance and teacher retention.

Interviewer Bias. According to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990, p. 15), focus groups serve many purposes (i.e. to obtain background information about a topic of interest; to generate research hypotheses that can be submitted to further research and testing using more quantitative approaches, and to diagnose the potential for problems with a new program, service or product). Despite the cautionary actions researchers take to ensure that potential sources of biases are minimized when conducting focus interviews, there

are two types of biases that may arise (Miles & Huberman, 1994): the effect the researcher has on his/her participants and the effect the participants have on their researcher. By examining his/her biases, through a systematic critical reflection (Onwuegbuzi, Leech, & Collins, 2010), the researcher would be able to prevent them from affecting the results of his/her data.

Due to the researcher's involvement in the SDPBC's mentor-based induction program, there was a strong possibility of interviewer bias in which the researcher may have inadvertently influenced the responses of the participants by providing subtle cues in favor of the mentor-based program. In order to address this issue, the researcher made every attempt to remain neutral in the conversations by allowing participants to lead the conversation. The types of questions asked were prepared in advance. The open-ended questions provided participants the opportunity to describe the support they received as well as provide specific examples to support their responses in regards to each of the components of their induction program. In addition, the researcher refrained from sharing information that could have contributed to bias by inferring personal preferences.

Summary

The methodology section describes the procedures of the study. The context of the study took place in DA, Correct II schools within the SDPBC. The basis of the study focused on three research questions that pertained to the three major components of the SDPBC's induction program. The sample consisted of first and second year teachers new to the district, with no prior teaching experience. The researcher utilized the sequential explanatory mixed-method strategy in which the collection and analysis of quantitative data was followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. Data collection took

place in the form of a survey that was disseminated through Qualtrics. Ethical issues were considered prior to IRB approval from the SDPBC and Lynn University. Participants were guaranteed anonymity as there were no identifiers on the surveys or within the focus group. Internal and external validity, along with the reliability of the surveys, were addressed with the support of school district personnel and Cronbach's Alpha statistic. A quasi-experimental design was utilized for data analysis. The collected data was downloaded from Qualtrics in an Excel file and imported into SPSS 20.0 for analysis. Themes were determined by the researcher and coded for analysis. Delimitations were identified and addressed by the researcher in order to strengthen the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This study examined the impact of a mentor-based induction program on teacher retention. A quasi-experimental design was used to determine whether there were any differences between teachers who participated in the SDPBC's mentor-based program and those who participated in a school-based mentor program. The data collected focused specifically on teachers' induction program experiences and the likelihood of teacher retention. The quantitative data was downloaded from Qualtrics in an Excel file and imported into SPSS 20.0 for analysis. In addition, a focus group was conducted and analyzed as a means to refine the quantitative phase of the study. Data collection occurred from February 6 through May 31, 2012. Participants were invited to participate in this study through an email which included a link to the online surveys. Of the 248 surveys that were emailed to first and second year teachers employed by Title I, Category II schools a total of 99 teachers responded by completion of the surveys. Eighty-seven participants met the criteria of having no previous teaching assignment beyond their current assignment. However, it should be noted that one participant had incomplete data on items representing the construct of teacher retention; therefore, the participant was excluded from analyses involving teacher retention variables, resulting in an effective sample size of 86 for the main study analyses. Seven out of the 87 teachers responded to the invitation to be a part of the focus group.

Summary of Analyses

Prior to the examination of the three research questions, composite scores were created and reliability and descriptive analyses were conducted. Data assumptions were examined (i.e., data normality/frequency distributions to detect data anomalies and outliers), and means, standard deviations, and ranges were computed. The researcher also examined the relationship between teacher demographic characteristics and dependent measures to explore potential confounding variables.

Data reduction. In order to reduce the data to a more manageable form, summary scores were created for several components of the BTIPS. Specifically, mean scores of items were calculated within similar construct areas as described below (e.g., items related to efficacy; items related to professional development). In order to determine internal consistency of the survey questions, the researcher performed a reliability analysis using Cronbach's standardized alpha statistic for all summary scales that were created (i.e., professional development, mentor support, teacher evaluation components, teacher efficacy, and teacher retention).

First, items within the component areas of professional development, mentor support, and teacher evaluation were reverse scored, when necessary, so that higher scores represented more positive experiences (i.e., greater satisfaction, greater likelihood of using support structures). Since a significant number of items within the three induction program component areas were not on the same rating scale, items in these subscales were standardized using a z-score transformation through the descriptive procedure of SPSS 20.0 before being computed into their respective summary scores. For example, some survey items were based on a Likert scale, while others were based on a

dichotomous (yes/no) scale. In these instances, all items within the component were first standardized to a mean of zero ($SD = 1$), and then averaged with the other items within that component, allowing all items to be on the same scoring scale. Categorical items were not figured into the scale scores.

The resulting professional development component mean score ($M = 0$, $SD = .54$, range from -1.86 to $.96$) was based on nine standardized items, with Cronbach's alpha = $.70$. The mentor support component mean score ($M = 0$, $SD = .70$, range from -1.90 to $.79$) was based on 10 standardized items, with Cronbach's alpha = $.88$. Teacher evaluation component mean score ($M = 0$, $SD = .62$, range from -1.94 to $.87$) was comprised of five standardized items, with Cronbach's alpha = $.60$. Alpha coefficients for both professional development and mentor support scales were considered acceptable according to Kline (1999). However, the teacher evaluation scale was below acceptable based on Kline's interpretation (1999).

A similar procedure was used to compute a mean scale score for teacher efficacy ($n = 13$ items). First, all items were reversed (1 becomes 3 and 3 becomes 1) so that in all cases, higher scores on this scale represented higher levels of efficacy (i.e., lower need for support). Next, items were averaged to create a mean efficacy scale score ($M = 2.24$, $SD = .50$, range from 1.15 to 3.00). Cronbach's alpha for the teacher efficacy scale was $.91$ which indicates acceptable (Kline, 1999).

Finally, a mean score was computed to represent the construct of teacher retention based on the impact of the induction program and likelihood of returning to teaching ($n = 3$ items). Two of the items were reverse scored so that all items represented a more positive impact of the induction program, and thus, greater likelihood of retention. Mean

scores for teacher retention were 3.45 ($SD = 1.16$, range from 0 to 5) and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient estimate was .87, suggesting acceptability of the scale (Kline, 1999).

Descriptive analyses. Ninety-nine teachers responded to having an interest in participating in the study; however, only 87 were retained in the sample as it was determined by the survey that 13 teachers did not meet the researcher's study criterion of having had no previous teaching experience. There were no age, gender, race/ethnic, or educational level restrictions for teachers, therefore, this study encompassed individuals of various ages, races, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds. The participants were drawn from the SDPBC. The researcher obtained a sample of elementary, middle, and high school teachers in various areas of the county for the study.

Frequency distributions of demographic variables are presented in Table 1 by group (SDPBC's mentor-based program and school-based programs). A visual inspection of the results suggests that the two groups were approximately equivalent in terms of key background characteristics such as age, race, gender, and professional experience. In order to statistically determine whether any demographic variables were potential confounds of the main study analyses, chi-square analyses were conducted to compare the two groups in terms of the proportion of teachers falling within demographic subgroups. Results revealed that there were no significant differences in the proportion of teachers in the mentor-based or school-based programs in terms of the demographics listed in Table 1 (Note: percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding).

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics for Teachers in the Mentor- and School-Based Programs

Demographic Characteristic	Mentor-based Program (N = 52)		School-based Program (N = 35)	
	N	%	N	%
Age				
21 and under	1	1.9	1	2.9
22 to 34	29	55.8	28	80.0
35 to 44	9	17.3	5	14.3
45 to 54	10	19.2	1	2.9
55 and over	3	5.7	0	0
Ethnicity/Race				
Black/Non Hispanic	18	34.6	8	22.9
White/Non Hispanic	27	51.9	22	62.9
Hispanic	5	9.6	5	14.3
Asian/Pacific Islander/Other	2	3.8	0	0
Gender				
Male	14	26.9	11	31.4
Female	38	73.1	24	68.6
Education				
Bachelors	33	63.5	19	54.3
Masters/Specialist	19	36.5	16	45.7
Teacher Prep Graduate				
Yes	31	59.6	25	71.4
No	21	40.4	10	28.6
Enrolled in ACP				
Yes	14	26.9	7	20.0
No	38	73.1	28	80.0
Teaching Category				
Professional	30	57.7	16	45.7
Temporary	22	42.3	19	54.3
Teaching Assignment				
Elementary	23	44.2	18	51.4
Middle	12	23.1	10	28.6
High	17	32.7	7	20.0
Teaching Location				
North	18	34.6	17	48.6
Central	19	36.5	12	34.3
West	10	19.2	5	14.3
South	5	9.6	1	2.9

Frequency distributions as well as measures of central tendency and dispersion for the main study variables were also examined. Mean, standard deviations, and the minimum and maximum scores of dependent measures are presented in Table 2 by group (mentor-based or school-based program). As previously mentioned, results of the descriptive statistics revealed that one participant had incomplete data on items representing the construct of teacher retention; therefore, the participant was excluded from analyses involving teacher retention variables, resulting in an effective sample size of 86 for the main study analyses. Table 2 shows the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation of dependent measures by the SDPBC's mentor- and school-based induction programs.

Table 2

Minimum (Min), Maximum (Max), Mean, and Standard Deviation (SD) of Dependent Measures by SDPBC's Mentor-Based and School-Based Programs

	Mentor-based Program (<i>n</i> = 52)				School-based Program (<i>n</i> = 35)			
	Min	Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Professional Development	-1.16	.96	.06	.47	-1.86	.96	-.09	.62
Mentor Support	-1.35	.79	.30	.44	-1.90	.58	-.45	.77
Teacher Evaluation	-1.94	.87	.00	.58	-1.94	.87	-.00	.69
Teacher Efficacy	1.23	3.00	2.32	.50	1.15	2.92	2.14	.50
Teacher Retention	0.00	5.00	3.31	1.17	1.00	5.00	3.66	1.14

Note. Sample size decreased to 86 participants due to incomplete data on construct of teacher retention.

Next, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine whether there were any differences between teachers based on subgroups of age, race, education, gender, areas of professional experience, teaching assignment, and teaching location on the dependent variables (professional development, mentor support, teacher evaluation, teacher efficacy, and teacher retention). In terms of age, education, gender, areas of professional experience, and teaching location, there were no significant differences between subgroups on any of the dependent variables. Teachers of all age groups, educational level, men and women, and teachers with more and less professional experience (e.g., teacher preparation, ACP, temporary versus professional teaching assignment) all had similar perceptions in terms of their beliefs about professional development, mentor support, teacher evaluation practices, teacher efficacy, and likelihood of teacher retention. There were, however, significant differences in professional development mean scale scores between teachers who were assigned to work in a middle school and teachers who were assigned to work at an elementary and high school, $F(2, 84) = 4.05, p = .02$. Specifically, post-hoc tests of least significant difference multiple comparisons revealed that teachers working at middle schools had significantly lower scores ($M = -.27, SD = .58$) in terms of their beliefs about professional development as compared to teachers in elementary and high schools ($M_s = .11$ and $.06$, $SD_s = .52$ and $.47$, and $p_s = .007$ and $.04$, respectively).

There were also significant race differences in terms of teachers' beliefs about the teacher evaluation process. For the purposes of being able to compute post-hoc comparisons across ethnic groups, the teacher who indicated that his/her race was Asian ($n = 1$) was collapsed with the teacher who indicated his/her race as Other ($n = 1$). This

combined group had significantly lower scores on the teacher evaluation mean scale score ($M = -1.40$, $SD = .77$) than teachers who reported their race was Black/non-Hispanic, White/non-Hispanic, or Hispanic ($M_s = .12$, $-.02$, and $.07$, $SD_s = .70$, $.54$, and $.45$, respectively). After excluding the small group of teachers who designated their race as Asian or Other, there were no significant race differences remaining in terms of the dependent measures.

Results for Research Question 1

Q1. What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the SDPBC's induction program when they are receiving mentor-based versus school-based support?

The independent variable was the type of induction program (SDPBC's mentor-based program versus a school-based program) and the dependent variables were the teachers' experiences with the district's induction program (mentoring, professional development, and teacher evaluation). In order to compare mentor-based to school-based induction programs, an independent t -test was conducted to examine whether there was a significant difference, at a p -value of less than .05, in mean scores on the dependent variables of professional development, mentor support, and teacher evaluation between teachers in the mentor-based and school-based programs.

Results suggested that there were significant differences between teachers in the mentor-based and school-based programs in terms of their beliefs about mentor support, where equal variances were not assumed (Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, $F = 21.75$, $p < .0001$). Teachers in the mentor-based programs had significantly higher mean scores on the mentor support scale compared to teachers in the school-based programs ($M_s = .30$ and $-.45$, $SD_s = .44$ and $.77$) with $t(85) = 5.21$, $p < .0001$. There were no

significant differences between teachers in the mentor- and school-based programs in terms of their beliefs about professional development or teacher evaluation processes with $t_s(85 \text{ and } 85) = 1.36$ and $.03$, $ps = .18$ and $.98$, respectively, with equal variances assumed (Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, $F_s = 3.43$ and 1.26 , $ps = .07$ and $.26$, respectively) (see Table 3).

Table 3

Results of Independent Samples t-tests for Research Question 1

Dependent Variable	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i> -value	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference		Lower	Upper
Mentor Support Mean Score	Equal variances assumed	21.75	0.00	5.77	85	0.00	0.75	0.13		0.49	1.01
	Equal variances not assumed			5.21	49	0.00	0.75	0.14		0.46	1.04
Professional Development Mean Score	Equal variances assumed	3.43	0.07	1.36	85	0.18	0.16	0.12		-0.07	0.39
	Equal variances not assumed			1.29	59	0.20	0.16	0.12		-0.09	0.41
Teacher Evaluation Mean Score	Equal variances assumed	1.26	0.26	0.03	85	0.97	0.00	0.14		-0.27	0.28
	Equal variances not assumed			0.03	64	0.98	0.00	0.14		-0.28	0.29

Note. $p < .0001$.

Results for Research Question 2

Q2. To what extent does the SDPBC's Educator Support Program impact teacher retention?

An independent *t*-test was used to address whether beginning teachers who are part of the SDPBC New Teacher Center's Mentor-Based Program (full-release mentoring) had greater likelihood of retention at the completion of their first or second year in comparison to those who were supported by the SDPBC Educator Support Program (school-based mentoring).

Again, the independent variable was the type of induction program (SDPBC's mentor-based program versus a school-based program). The dependent variable was teachers' reports of retention. An independent *t*-test was used and revealed that there was no significant difference, at a *p*-value of less than .05, in teachers' reports of the impact of the induction program on their retention for teachers in the mentor-based as compared to the school-based program (*Ms* = 3.31 and 3.66, *SDs* = 1.17 and 1.14) where equal variances were assumed (Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, $F = .08$, $p = .77$), $t(85) = -1.36$, $p = .18$ (see Table 4).

Table 4

Results of Independent Samples t-tests for Research Question 2

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
Dependent Variable		F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i> -value	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Teacher Retention Mean Score	Equal variances assumed	0.08	0.77	-1.36	85	0.18	-0.34	0.25	-0.85	0.16
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.36	75	0.18	-0.34	0.25	-0.84	0.16

Note. $p < .05$.

Results for Research Question 3

Q3. Based on qualitative focus group data, which component of the SDPBC Educator Support Program did teachers believe to have the greatest impact on teacher retention: district- or school-based mentor support, teacher evaluation, or professional development?

The qualitative findings of the focus groups addressed the issues of mentoring experience, teacher evaluation, and professional development. The analysis of the qualitative data resulted in three themes regarding each issue. The participants' responses regarding their experience in the induction program were grouped into the following themes: 1) mentoring experience, 2) teacher evaluation role, and 3) professional development experience. These themes described the participants' perception of each component of the induction program. Tables 5, 6, and 7 show the themes, codes that constituted each theme and the frequency of responses that occurred for each theme.

Component 1: Mentoring Experience. Beginning teachers enrolled in induction programs are usually provided mentors to support them in their first year of the profession. Some schools provide school-based mentors who usually teach within the same content area. These mentors have a full workload, consisting of classes in which they are responsible for lesson plans, assessments, and grades. In schools that are categorized as Title I, Category II, some novice teachers are supported by district-provided full-release mentors in which the sole responsibility of these mentors is to work with teachers in supporting their pedagogical growth. The seven teachers in the focus group were asked about the role of their mentor. The following provides an overview as

well as specific comments from members of the focus group pertaining to the two themes related to the mentoring experience.

Theme 1: Mentor Role. This theme addressed participants' perception of the role mentors played in supporting the novice teachers they were assigned. According to participants' perceptions, the role of mentors varied according to their status within the district, full-release or school based. Teachers who were assigned mentors were grateful of having someone to support them during their initial year in the profession. For example, Participant C (district-support) stated, "I can't conceive coming into this job without having someone who I can talk to, who is on my side and most important, is listening to me without judgment. I know it's a safe place, it's [conversation] not going any place." Participant A (district-support) found her mentor to be "helpful providing tips [she] can use in the classroom." Participant G (district-support) realized that "if it wasn't for [my] mentor, I would be lost."

All participants discussed their mentor's role in enhancing their instructional practices. However, those assigned a school-based mentor did not feel that their mentors provided ample time to support them. Participant B (school-based support) stated, "I always feel like the one I have, that I'm taking her time when I'm asking questions because I know the loads we have and I know what we're trying to do. I feel like, oh, here I am bugging her with this stupid question about how do I do whatever." Participant D's (school-based support) concern was that he did not see his mentor on a regular basis. "I also have a school-based mentor but I never see her. I see her maybe one or twice a month for a few minutes or so." Participant F (no mentor support), a member of the AC Program, discussed the support he received, which was minimal compared to the other

participants in the focus group. “Technically, I don’t have a mentor, which makes it kind of hard. The assignment that I have to do, I just have to read through them and make sure I understand. I’m doing assignments [tasks] and submitting them for a grade. That’s really what it is.” To summarize, those with full-release mentors described a positive relationship with their mentors. In contrast, those with school-based mentors had mixed feelings about the relationship they had with their mentors. Table 5 shows the themes associated with mentor support in addition to the codes and their frequencies.

Table 5

Component 1 “Mentor Support”: Qualitative Themes, Codes, and Code Frequencies

Theme	Codes	Participants							Total
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Mentor Relationship	Mentor is supportive	X		X				X	3
	Mentor has no time for support		X		X	X	X		4
	I do not have mentor; I am in the AC Program						X		1
	I have a full-release (district) mentor	X		X				X	3
	I have a school-based mentor		X		X	X			3
Moving Teacher Practice	Mentor’s role is supportive in moving teacher practice	X		X				X	3
	Mentor’s role is unsupportive in moving teacher practice		X		X	X	X		4
	I would prefer to have a mentor with similar-content knowledge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7

Theme 2: Enhancing Teacher Practice. This theme addressed the role mentors played in improving beginning teachers' practice. According to participants' perception of the role mentors played in enhancing their practice, those with full-release mentors were appreciative of having someone to guide them in making instructional decisions that were conducive to their pedagogical growth. For example, Participant A (district support) stated, "My mentor is very helpful with providing tips I can use in the classroom...I find his information useful. He's very helpful to me." Participant G (district support) realized that if it was not for her mentor advising what to do with regards to the utilization of anchor charts, she would have been "clueless to this day." In contrast, Participant D (school-based support) explained that due to the busy schedule of her mentor, she (school-based mentor) would "sign off on my accomplished practices, without ever observing me." Although all participants agreed that it would have been more beneficial to have a mentor who shared similar-content knowledge, those who had the full-release mentors were appreciative of having someone to provide support on a weekly basis.

Component 2: Teacher Evaluation. The SDPBC began its implementation of the Marzano Evaluation System in the 2011-2012 school year in order to be in compliance with Senate Bill 736 (S. 736, 2011), which required a new evaluation for teachers that would consist of four performance levels (highly effective, effective, needs improvement, and unsatisfactory). In order to support teachers in their pedagogical growth, administrators were trained in the new protocol during the 2010-2011 school year prior to utilizing the evaluation tool. All teachers, regardless of tenure, were required to be evaluated a certain number of times during the school year and were provided with feedback that would support them in positively impacting student performance. The

following provides an overview, as well as specific comments, from members of the focus group pertaining to the impact that the evaluation system had on enhancing their practice in order to increase student performance.

Theme: Support. This theme addressed the role in which the evaluation system supported beginning teachers in moving their practice. According to the novice teachers' perceptions of the evaluation system, the evaluation tool did not support their practice in helping them to grow as educators. Teachers felt pressured by the impact the evaluation system had on their administrators' decision to continue their employment. Not having enough time to learn about the tool, or practice using the tool to support their pedagogical growth, led to an increase in anxiety and, as a result, caused the teachers to question the role of the evaluation tool in moving their pedagogical practice. The novice teachers perceived the support provided by administrators to be a hindrance in enhancing their practice as they felt more stressed in having to please them (administrators) than in teaching. Table 6 shows the themes associated with the teacher evaluation component in addition to the codes and their frequencies. Table 7 shows the comments made by participants as they pertained to the use of the evaluation tool to support teacher practice.

Table 6

Component 2 “Teacher Evaluation”: Qualitative Themes, Codes, Code Frequencies and Participant Summaries

Theme	Codes	Participants							Total
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Support	Evaluation tool supports my practice								0
	Evaluation tool does not support my practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7
Support	Evaluation tool supports my practice								0

Table 7

Participant comments as they relate to the use of the evaluation tool to support teacher practice

Participant	Comments
E (School-Based)	<p>In my school, they're really trying to come to us full swing and do what they want to, but I feel upset because of them [administrators] pressuring us. You can see it in our building. It's just, you're putting pressure on all of us and we're not getting through the year with the confidence of knowing that what we are doing really impacts student performance.</p> <p>I think if we had a model then their response would be that every class is different so you have to differentiate your scales to meet your class needs. That's overwhelming because I feel like we should have a template...We need something and then we can build on it every year.</p>
B (School-Based)	<p>They [administrators] say, "We understand that it's a dog and pony show. But, we can't sign off on the Design Questions (DQs) until we see it." This is disheartening to a teacher who has come to the profession with the intent of just teaching. I didn't expect things to be so complicated.</p>
C (District Support)	<p>The amount of time and angst spent on those scales so everybody was in line so when observations came around was incredible. If everybody had the same scales, obviously, our observations would be a breeze. The issue really wasn't with writing the scales; the issue is that Marzano has us implementing the scales. That's the deal. We should be practicing implementing those scales not worrying how we offer them.</p>
D (School-Based)	<p>In our school we can't use Marzano [scales], we can use it as a guide to create our own, but we just have all that added pressure of, "Okay, now I have to make it, but then I have to have my kids understand it." Now I'm taking on extra time to really make sure when they [students] come in they know what a 4.0 is. There are so many steps just to get through a lesson. Now they're [administrators] taking away from our instructional time so that we're really implementing these things... You get one training on it and that one training is supposed to go for each subject area. They're all complex because they're different standards. It's just a lot.</p>
G (District-Support)	<p>Teaching is no longer about children. To go back to the point, what overwhelms me the most is the fact that you can go into a classroom thinking that you're going to see all the DQ's in one day. That's not teaching. I'm not thinking about what I'm telling the kids to understand. I'm thinking about how I should please my administrator. That's not the way it's supposed to be. At least, that's not how I envisioned it.</p>

Component 3: Professional Development Experience. Throughout a teacher's career, he/she is provided the opportunity to attend and/or be a part of professional development (PD) workshop/trainings that should support his/her growth as an educator. The number of professional development trainings varies as novice teachers are required to attend a greater number of workshops in order to strengthen their pedagogical practice. The SDPBC's Department of Professional Development provides an array of trainings and workshops to assist beginning teachers in learning strategies and collecting tools that will support their growth. The following describes the beginning teachers' perception of the professional development received as it related to improving their practice.

Theme: Support. This theme addressed the role PD plays in supporting novice teachers. According to some novice teachers' perception of the PD they received during the school year, the training sessions and workshops did little to enhance their practice. Participant G (district support) viewed the PD received on campus to be simplistic to the point that she felt she was being given training she could "produce on my own." Participant B (school-based support) found it to be "meaningless" once there was a "switch from content-based to Marzano." Participant G (district support) felt that the content was not specific to the subject area she taught, "They want us to implement reading strategies, but ...the kind of strategy that they're trying to have us implement isn't necessarily social-studies friendly. So, I find myself just sitting there nodding okay when it's not really okay. Participant F (school-based support) did not believe the Learning Team Facilitator who provided professional development in her school was knowledgeable of all content areas, "She doesn't know our content, and so it's hard. Like when she comes, she asks us questions and we're kind of not sure how to answer it

because it has nothing to do with what we teach.” Participant A (district support) described her Professional Development Days to entail reading chapters from a book and then “break up into department meetings, and then we’re supposed to tell what you got from the chapters.” According to Participant D (school-based support), “We go home and we’re like, “what just happened?” I know I sat there all day long. I don’t understand what is going on because I didn’t see it in action.”

Contrary to those who found their PD to have no significant impact on their pedagogical practice, there was one participant who found the training experience to be beneficial:

Participant E (school-based support): We have people from the district come in and help us with what we’re just implementing this year, like the writer's workshop. They come into our room and help us model things for us. And, they'll have dates when they'll come in and we watch them doing something with the classes, and all the teachers gather around and watch them model something, and we'll talk about it. I find it very valuable.

Table 8 shows the themes associated with professional development experience in addition to the codes and their frequencies.

Table 8

Component 3 “Professional Development Experience”: Qualitative Themes, Codes, and Code Frequencies

Theme	Codes	Participants							Total
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Support	PD supported pedagogical growth					X			1
	PD did not support pedagogical growth	X	X	X	X		X	X	6

Summary of Results

Analysis of both phases of the study concluded that there were significant differences between teachers’ perceptions of the type of program they were a part of, with the mentor-based program having a more positive impact. Teachers in the mentor-based program reported a more positive experience with regards to working with their district mentors due to the structure and consistency of the support they were receiving. The qualitative phase, consisting of the focus group, substantiated these results as most teachers were able to verbally express their appreciation for their mentors and the work they did to support their practice. There were no significant differences between teachers in either program in terms of their perceptions of the professional development being provided and the teacher evaluation system utilized as a means to enhance their practice. However, the level of efficacy exhibited by teachers with district mentors was higher. There was no significant difference reported by the teachers who were a part of either program as the results showed that neither group was more likely to remain in the profession than the other. Based on the focus group, teachers were not pleased with the

evaluation system as they believed it did little to move their practice. There was also concern about the PD that was provided as teachers did not find it to be meaningful to their practice. For the most part, the content that was provided did not align to their area of practice and as a result had no significant effect on their teaching. Overall, the mentoring experience was most significant for beginning teachers in moving their practice; whereas, the other components of the induction program (PD and teacher evaluation) had no significant impact regarding pedagogical support.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The negative impact associated with leaving the profession within five years of teaching has led policymakers to seek additional solutions for the long-term retention of teachers, ending in the desired outcome of an increase in student achievement. Heightened attention has been given to induction programs as they have been shown to yield an increase in teacher retention (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006). Yet, the relentless challenges associated with work conditions and insufficient support has led many novice teachers to exit the profession, prematurely, leaving school districts with the immense task of finding replacements; a task that can be both financially and emotionally costly. Not only are school districts affected by the cost of recruitment and training of novice teachers but more significantly it is the students who lose the value of being taught by effective teachers (Alliance for Education, 2005). Despite the continued efforts by researchers to outline the type of support that is specific to beginning teacher needs, policymakers have yet to mandate specific components for induction programs. However, according to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (2006), there has been growing evidence of the positive impact of induction programs, on teacher retention, with carefully selected and highly-trained mentors. In addition, Mullen (2011) states the positive impact of mentoring has not only led to increased retention but also job satisfaction. This outcome has ultimately supported schools and districts in meeting state accountability goals.

The SDPBC, in an effort to reduce the impact of the cyclical trend of having to recruit and retrain beginning teachers, partnered with the New Teacher Center in 2009 to implement a mentor-based induction program. The SDPBC Department of Professional Development believed that having a full-release mentor-based induction program would not only yield a higher retention rate for beginning teachers, but it would also positively impact student achievement. In its effort to decrease the high attrition rate among beginning teachers employed in low income and low performing schools, the SDPBC's mentor-based induction program worked specifically with Title I schools. During the first year of implementation, the school district recruited and trained seven classroom teachers to become full-release mentors, who would support first year teachers. The following year, mentors continued to support these teachers and were assigned additional first year teachers, each having a caseload of approximately 18 teachers from various schools, grade levels, and content areas.

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the support provided by the SDPBC's mentor-based program on teacher retention as compared to the support provided by school-based mentoring. The research explored the relationship between the type of support received by novice teachers (i.e. full-release or school-based mentoring) and their decision to remain in the profession.

Review of Methods and Variables

A quasi-experimental design was used to determine whether there were any differences between teachers who participated in the SDPBC's mentor-based program and those who participated in a school-based program; specifically, teachers' induction program experiences, efficacy, and the likelihood of teacher retention. Participants of the

study consisted of 86 first and second year teachers from the SDPBC who responded to a survey consisting of categorical, dichotomous, and 5-point Likert scale questions pertaining to the three components of the district's induction program: mentor support, teacher evaluation, and professional development. In addition, eight of those teachers agreed to be a part of a focus group. Results from both the survey and focus groups were analyzed and interpreted based on the context of this study. The data collected from the Beginning Teacher Induction Program Survey (BTIPS) were presented in tables followed by descriptive analyses. Data collected from the focus group was presented in a narrative format.

Summary of Results

The results from the BTIPS suggested that demographics had no significant effect on the teachers' perception of their induction program. Furthermore, data from the survey suggested that although teachers who were assigned full-release mentors had a more positive experience during their beginning years as professionals, their decision to remain in the profession was not greater than those who were assigned school-based mentors. Results from the focus group suggested that mentees with full-released mentors were more content with their work environment and were more likely to remain in the classroom longer if they continued to receive support from their mentors beyond the two years.

The interpretation of the results of the three research questions that guided this study were as follows:

Research Question 1. What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the SDPBC's induction program when they are receiving mentor-based versus school-based support?

Teachers who received mentor-based support had a more positive experience than school-based support mentees. The remaining components of the induction program, professional development and teacher evaluation, did not yield any significance in regards to teachers' perception as they were perceived negatively by both groups.

Research Question 2. To what extent does the SDPBC's Educator Support Program (ESP) impact teacher retention?

Regardless of the support program teachers were assigned (mentor-based or school-based), their perception of the ESP did not have a statistically significant impact on their decision to remain in the profession.

Research Question 3. Based on qualitative focus group data, which component of the SDPBC Educator Support Program did teachers believe to have the greatest impact on teacher retention: district- or school-based mentor support, teacher evaluation, or professional development?

Of the three components of the SDPBC's Educator Support Program, teachers assigned full-release mentors were more positive in their responses that were related to enhancing their practice. Both groups felt pressured by the evaluation system in moving their practice and questioned its role in improving pedagogical skills. While a majority of the participants found their professional development experience lacking in meaning, there was one participant who felt that the workshops to have a positive impact in enhancing teacher practice and student achievement.

Discussion of Results

Research Question 1. What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the SDPBC's induction program when they are receiving mentor-based versus school-based support?

Results suggested that there were significant differences between teachers in the mentor-based and school-based programs in terms of their beliefs about mentor support. Teachers who are assigned high-quality full-release mentors are more likely to have a positive perception about their induction program. With the assistance of highly-qualified mentors trained to support novice teachers to increase effectiveness and efficacy (Moir, Barlin, Gless, & Miles (2009), the teachers supported by these individuals were likely to show an increase in efficacy that manifested in the form of increased student achievement. The level of guidance and support provided by mentors gives teachers the confidence needed to impact student performance at a greater rate in comparison to those who only receive school-based support. Full-release mentors can dedicate time to guiding their mentees consistently throughout the school year because they do not have a classroom of their own.. Their support is ongoing; whereas, the school-based mentors are accountable for their own classrooms and thus are only capable of supporting their mentees based on availability.

Research Question 2. To what extent does the SDPBC's Educator Support Program impact teacher retention?

Since mentoring is only one-third of the induction program, it may not be enough to have an impact on the overall perception of the program to affect retention. Although mentoring is not induction, but rather a component of the induction process (Wong, 2004), teachers who were assigned full-release mentors had a more positive perception of their induction program than those assigned school-based mentors. Beginning teachers' perception of professional development and the evaluation system could have negatively impacted the positive effects, of mentoring, resulting in responses from the survey

reflecting that there was no significant difference in the impact of any specific component of the ESP that would have an influence on their decision to remain in the profession.

The results from the survey contradict the theory that a comprehensive induction program that has the following components would yield a higher retention rate than one without them: collaboration with small learning communities, observation of experienced colleagues' classrooms, being observed by expert mentors, teacher analysis and reflection of practice and networking with other novice teachers (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The use of full release mentors allowed the SDPBC Mentor-Based Induction Program to comprise all of the above components. Full-release mentors were able to provide those services as a result of being non-classroom teachers, unlike school-based mentors who lack the flexibility within their schedules to provide the services. Despite having these structures in place, there was no significant difference ($p < .05$) in teachers' reports of the impact of the induction program on their retention, regardless of the support received (full-release or school-based). The responses from the survey would suggest that the district's induction program does not need to be as structured in order to yield retention. Participants' reports of additional support outside the induction program could play an important role in explaining the lack of impact mentoring had on their decisions to remain in the profession.

Research Question 3. Based on qualitative focus group data, which component of the SDPBC Educator Support Program did teachers believe to have the greatest impact on teacher retention: district- or school-based mentor support, teacher evaluation, or professional development?

Although the purpose of the focus group was to substantiate the results of the quantitative data, it did not validate the responses from the surveys in which teachers stated that there was no specific component of the induction program that contributed to their decision to remain in the profession. Instead, the results from the focus group suggested that of the three components of the district's support program, mentor-based support would have the greatest impact on their decision to continue teaching. An explanation for why mentor-based support would yield a positive result was the consistency of the support provided by the mentors. Full-release mentors undergo a rigorous two-year training that equips them with the tools necessary to support the development of the beginning teacher's practice. The mentors rely on the New Teacher Center's Formative Assessment System Tools (i.e. Analysis of Student Work; Content, Strategies, and Alignment; Collaborative Assessment Log; and Individual Learning Plan) and use of specific language to move teacher practice. They are selected under stringent criteria and have been trained to impact teacher performance.

Conversely, the teacher evaluation system, in its premature state, continues to be part of a learning process for administrators. As a result, the subjectivity of teacher rating has led many teachers to perceive the system as being more of a hindrance. In addition, professional development, provided by school district personnel, varies by the level of the trainer's expertise. Teachers' perception of professional development has diminished as they do not find the value of these trainings to enhance their practice.

Limitations

The conclusions of this study were based on the sample of teachers employed in Title I schools. A big disadvantage the researcher had in regards to the convenience

sampling utilized in the study is that the group of beginning teachers may not have been a true representation of the entire target population of beginning teachers in the SDPBC. Of the 248 surveys that were emailed to first and second year teachers employed by Title I, Category II schools a total of 100 teachers responded by completion of the surveys. Yet, only a portion of the sample (N=86) met the criteria of being in their first and second years of teaching. The time at which this study took place was between February and May of 2012. During this period, teachers are highly engaged in preparing students for the Florida Comprehensive Accomplished Assessment Test (FCAT). Many beginning teachers may have chosen not to participate in the study due to the stress of having to prepare students for the exam. In contrast, those who chose to participate may have completed the survey haphazardly as a means to quickly complete the task. As a result, the responses to the 33-question survey may not have been a true reflection of the respondents' perception of their induction program.

In addition, this study was limited by the timeframe of the study as it did not take into account the impact of mentoring beyond two years of support provided by full-release mentors and the one year of support provided by school-based mentors. It is unclear whether the support would lead to a decrease in the attrition rate once it is discontinued. Although the study focused on teacher retention, student achievement was beyond the scope of this study and should also have been considered since this is one of the leading motivations for increasing teacher retention. According to the research, teachers who remain in the profession for a period of three to five years are more likely to impact student achievement (Murnane, 1975). In addition, a study conducted by Ingersoll and Strong (2011) suggests the length at which teachers remain in the classroom can have

a significant impact on student achievement as a result of the number and quality of professional development sessions they participate in during the course of their employment. Teachers who remain longer in the profession are more likely to have a repertoire of strategies and skills that will impact the success rate of students.

Other limitations that may have influenced the results were:

1. Participants – noncompliance. Although beginning teachers are expected to participate in the SDPBC's induction program, there is a possibility that some may not have completed the program with fidelity. For example, beginning teachers may have chosen not to attend every professional development workshop. As a result, they may have excluded themselves from meaningful workshops that would have impacted their performance, thus, leading to a decrease in self-efficacy. In addition, conflict of personality would be a factor in the teacher's decision to remain distant from his/her mentor on a continual basis. Without that continued support, a teacher may not be able to see the benefits of mentoring. These issues may have an impact on their perception of the induction program as a whole.
2. Social desirability. Many of the survey questions included in the BTIPS asked teachers to respond truthfully about their experience in the induction program. Teachers may feel that the researcher may think differently of them if they were to admit to their deficiencies. In addition, they may believe that their administrator would have access to the results of their survey since it was sent to their school district email. As a result, their responses may have been biased toward what they would want the researcher and/or administrator to

believe about them. They have a vested interest in increasing and/or maintaining their social desirability.

3. Locus of control (Phares, 1978). Internal and external forces can have an impact on a teacher's decision to remain in the profession. An internal factor such as altruism can play a huge role in an educator's decision to remain in the classroom. Nonetheless, outside factors such as school leadership, students, parents, and colleagues can be one of many reasons why teachers leave. Regardless of the support provided to beginning teachers, if a teacher is unable to balance his/her locus of control, he/she will be more likely to exhibit a decrease in job satisfaction (Kelchtermans, 1999). Therefore, the support provided by induction programs may not have enough impact on a teacher's decision to either stay or leave to balance the effects of forces outside the profession.

Recommendations for Future Research

The role of mentoring plays an important part in a novice teacher's pedagogical practice. The future of the SDPBC's New Teacher Mentor-Based Induction Program is dependent not only on teacher retention but also student achievement. Although the mentor-based program is fully funded by Title I, there will need to be a substantial amount of data to support the positive impact it has on the retention and achievement in order to keep the program intact. At the time of this study, the district had two types of induction programs: mentor-based and school-based. If the study demonstrated mentor-based induction to be more effective in retaining teachers than school-based induction, it would provide the impetus for policymakers to invest more funding in hiring additional

mentors to support first and second year teachers. The following section describes recommendations for future research.

This study was limited to a convenience sample due to the availability of participants. In order to obtain an increase in the number of participants, researchers will need to obtain buy-in from the superintendent and school board in order to require all schools with full-release and school-based mentors to be a part of the study. With the support from the superintendent and school board, the participant rate would be more likely to increase. Increased participation would allow the researcher to make further generalizations about the impact of mentoring on retention. This statement of inference will be utilized to provide the SDPBC with substantial evidence to either maintain or discontinue the full-release mentor program.

Another limitation occurred as a result of the timeframe in which the researcher conducted the study. The impact of mentoring focused on one school year, FY2012, and did not address the impact of mentoring beyond the two years of mentor support. It is recommended that a longitudinal study of teachers supported by full-release and school-based mentors be employed in order to determine the impact of either type of mentoring on retention beyond two years. According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), teachers who remain in the profession for a longer period are better equipped to impact student achievement due to the number and quality of professional development they are exposed to over the years. In addition, research conducted by Hanushek (2009) implies that increasing a student's exposure to the teachings of highly qualified teachers (at least four or five years in row) decreases the achievement gap between low-income and average-income students, making lack of high-quality teachers in the classroom one of the most

urgent problem facing American education (Murnane & Steele, 2007). A longitudinal study would be able to address whether full-release or school-based mentoring has a greater effect on not only a teacher's decision to remain in the profession, but also his/her performance in the classroom and ultimately student performance.

To determine the impact of full-release mentoring on student achievement, a mixed-methodology approach should be used to collect data. The quantitative component would include results from assessments (i.e. Diagnostics, FCAT, and end-of-course exams) and the qualitative aspect should include mentor observations in addition to interviews and focus groups in order to capture the true essence of full-release mentoring in comparison to school-based mentoring. Participants of the focus groups would include beginning teachers as well as students and school-based administrators. Beginning teachers would describe their support experience. Students would discuss their experience being in the classrooms of teachers supported by either type of mentors, and school-based administrators would discuss the evidence of professional growth they see as a result of the beginning teacher being supported by either mentor.

Implications for Practice

Literature suggests mentoring, as part of a comprehensive induction program, yields a higher retention rate than those without (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The movement to improve induction programs in recent years has placed the spotlight on the mentoring component of induction programs as studies have shown the positive impact it has on retention (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). However, mentoring, in and of itself, does not increase the retention rate. It will need to be part of a program built on high quality induction and professional development

(Wong, 2004). Teachers who feel unsupported and ineffective are more likely to leave the profession than those who are helped to understand their roles and become effective practitioners (Martin, 2012). The relationship between support and retention is one of the strongest incentives for the creation of induction programs. A strong support structure that includes highly qualified mentors will have an impact on a teacher's decision to remain in the profession.

This study contributes to the body of research on teacher induction, full-release mentoring, and retention. The findings of this study provide information on beginning teachers' perception of the district's induction program in addition to the impact of mentoring on their pedagogical practice. Teachers who were assigned full-release mentors reported having a more positive experience than those who were assigned school-based mentors. Although mentoring alone does not fully impact retention, it does increase teacher efficacy as teachers who were assigned full-release mentors exude more confidence in their teaching ability than those assigned school-based mentors.

Overall, the implication of this study is that mentoring, particularly in the context of full-release, may have a positive impact on teacher efficacy that contributes to teachers' decisions to remain in the profession long enough to impact student achievement. These positive effects appear to last beyond the two years of induction. Taking into consideration the impact of mentoring on job satisfaction, the SDPBC will be able to use the results of this study to ensure the first two years of the novice teacher's experience are ones in which he/she is fully supported. Full support that yields an increase in efficacy and job satisfaction increases the likelihood of retention beyond five-year mark.

Summary

The implementation of a comprehensive induction program, consisting of high-quality mentoring, is important for the retention of teachers. As the SDPBC continues to explore strategies that will impact teacher performance, they will also need to consider the exploration of programs that will retain teachers and impact pedagogy. Although the district's mentor-based program was in the early stage of implementation at the time of this study (three years), there is significant data to support its effectiveness. During the research year (FY2012), approximately 880 first year teachers were employed by the district. In that same year, government funding was allocated to allow approximately 115 teachers in their first and second years of teaching access to full-release mentors. Due to constant education reforms, the SDPBC's mentor-based program will continuously have to substantiate its impact to policy makers and stakeholders in order to keep its funding. Research has shown that although mentoring is a necessary component for induction, it needs to be a part of a strong support program. This study should prompt the SDPBC to not only looking into full-release mentoring as a means to supporting beginning teachers, but also as a way of revitalizing its existing educator support program to meet the needs of its educators and increase the district's retention rate.

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Appendix A: Voluntary Consent Form



LYNN
UNIVERSITY

Donald E. and Helen L. Ross
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Dear Educator,

Lynn University, in collaboration with the School District of Palm Beach County, is conducting a study of first and second-year teachers in order to gather data on attitudes and opinions regarding their induction program. You have been invited to participate in this study due to your participation in the district's induction program.

Procedures

The survey consists of 32 statements that will take approximately ten minutes to complete. The statements are designed to determine the impact of the three main components of district's induction program (professional development, mentoring, and standards-based evaluation) as they relate to teacher retention, efficacy, and job satisfaction. The survey can be accessed via www.qualtrics.com (additional information will follow). In addition, you are invited to participate in an unstructured group interview in which you will be asked to elaborate on your experience as a first year teachers and mentors. The principal researcher will contact you via email with a date, place, and time.

Risks/Discomforts

Risks are minimal for involvement in this study. Although the researcher does not expect any harm to come upon any participants due to electronic malfunction of the computer, it is possible though extremely rare and uncommon.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits for participants. However, it is hoped that through your participation, the researcher will learn more about the induction program in its relation to job satisfaction and teacher retention.

Confidentiality

All data obtained from participants will be confidential and will only be reported in an aggregate format (by reporting only combined results and never reporting individual ones). All statements will be concealed, and no one other than the primary investigator will have access to them. The data collected will be stored in the Qualtrics-secure database until it has been deleted by the primary investigator.

Participation

Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time or refuse to participate entirely without jeopardy to your job title. If you desire to withdraw, please notify the principal investigator at the following email:

[REDACTED]

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Denise S. Beattie
Lynn Doctoral Candidate

Appendix B: Teacher Demographic Profile

Demographic Survey

Age Range

- ☐ 21 and Under
- ☐ 22 to 34
- ☐ 35 to 44
- ☐ 45 to 54
- ☐ 55 to 64
- ☐ 65 and over

Race or Ethnicity

- ☐ Black/Non-Hispanic
- ☐ White/Non-Hispanic
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ Native American/Eskimo/Aleut
- ☐ Other

Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Do not wish to disclose

Educational Level

- ☐ Bachelor
- ☐ Masters
- ☐ EdS
- ☐ Doctorates

I graduated from a teacher preparation program.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I am/will be enrolled in an Alternative Certificate Program in order to obtain my teacher certificate.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Teacher contract

- ☐ Professional
- ☐ Temporary

Teaching Assignment

- ☐ Elementary
- ☐ Middle
- ☐ High

Area of school location (please access the following link

<http://www.palmbeachschools.org/Community/PDFs/Schools-Area.pdf> if unsure about school location).

- ☐ North
- ☐ Central
- ☐ West
- ☐ South

Appendix C: Beginning Teacher Induction Program Survey

Beginning Teacher Induction Program Survey

Part I: Professional Development

Professional development workshops/trainings are offered on school site.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My school has a Learning Team Facilitator.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

The school-based workshops/trainings are meaningful to the subject(s) that I teach.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

The district-provided workshops/trainings are meaningful to the subject(s) that I teach.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

The school-based trainers/facilitators are knowledgeable about the content they deliver.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

The district-provided trainers/facilitators are knowledgeable about the content they deliver.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

I have been offered the opportunity to attend professional development workshops/trainings provided by the district by my administrators.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My administrator/Professional Development contact/Learning Team Facilitator provides follow-up to the workshops/trainings attended.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I have visited the school district's professional development website at least once a month to see what workshops/trainings are offered that can be beneficial to my practice.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I find the school district's professional development website easy to peruse.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

The professional development workshops offered by the district support my growth as an educator.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Please choose the response for each item that best indicate your level of need for support.

	Little/No Need	Some Need	High Need
Classroom			
Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructional			
Resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analyzing			
Student Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Effective			
Teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategies			
Time			
Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating			
with Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Differentiating			
Instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management of			
Paperwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating			
with	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrators			

Lesson			
Planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Policies			
and Procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
District Policies			
and Procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional			
Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Trainings offered by professional development address the above needs.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Part II: Mentor Support

I was assigned a mentor this school year.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My mentor was provided by the district.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My mentor and I have common planning time to plan lessons and analyze student work.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My mentor is knowledgeable in the subject area I teach.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

My mentor sets high expectations for me to be successful.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

My mentor provides me with strategies that will help me to move my practice.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

My induction program provides me the opportunity to meet with a network of off-campus teachers to collaborate and receive support.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My mentor provides me with feedback that will help me to move my practice.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

I am in contact with my mentor at least once a week.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My mentor provides me the opportunity to reflect on my teaching practice.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Part III: Teacher Evaluation

I am knowledgeable about the district's teacher evaluation system.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

The district's evaluation system has been supportive in increasing my teaching skills.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Administrators have used the evaluation system to provide feedback.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

An Administrator has met with me to discuss his/her observation of my classroom instruction.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Which of the following has provided the most support in helping you to gain knowledge about the evaluation system?

- ☐ The Department of Professional Development
- ☐ My School Administrators
- ☐ My Mentor

Part IV: Induction Program Impact

Additional support you may be receiving in addition to the induction program. (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ Support from friends who are also educators
- ☐ Support from family members who are also educators
- ☐ Support from colleagues
- ☐ Support from teachers in other schools
- ☐ Support from previous teachers/professors
- ☐ Other

Which of the following components of the district's teacher induction program had the greatest impact on your growth as an educator this school year?

- ☐ Professional Development
- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Teacher Evaluation System

I am looking forward to teaching at my school the following school year.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

If I had the option to change careers I would pursue it.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

If I had the option of moving to a different school next year I would do it.

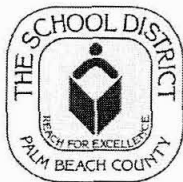
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Appendix D: Constructs of the Beginning Teacher Induction Program
Survey

Part	Construct	Measures
1	Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dichotomous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings • Learning Team Facilitator • PD opportunities • Admin. Support • PD website ➤ Likert scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Team Facilitator knowledge • Meaningful to content • PD website perusal • Beginning teacher growth • Trainings offered ➤ Categorical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom management • Instructional resources • Analyzing student work • Effective teaching strategies • Time management • Communicating with parents • Differentiating instruction • Management of paperwork • Communicating with administrators • Lesson planning • School policies and procedures • District policies and procedures ➤ Emotional support
2	Mentor Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dichotomous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor assignment • District/School-Based • Planning time • Network • Mentor availability ➤ Likert scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Expectations • Moving teacher practice • Feedback • Reflection

3	Teacher Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dichotomous • Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Likert scale • Knowledge • Supportive • Admin. Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Categorical • Most supportive
4	Induction Program/ Impact Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Categorical • Additional support • Impact on growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Likert scale • Anticipation • Retention (leaver) • Retention (mover)

Appendix E: School District of Palm Beach County Approval (Original Document)



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

MARK HOWARD
DIRECTOR

MARC BARON, Ph.D.
CHIEF, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND ASSESSMENT

3370 Forest Hill Boulevard, Suite B-246
West Palm Beach, FL 33406-5871

Ph. [REDACTED]
www.palmbeachschools.org/dre/

January 25, 2012

Ms. Denise S. Beattie
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Beattie:

The Superintendent's Research Review Committee has approved your request to conduct your research entitled, *Evaluation of the Impact of a Comprehensive Induction Program in a Large Urban School District*, in the School District of Palm Beach County (the District). The purpose of your study is to explore the effectiveness of the New Teacher component as well as two other main support structures of the district's induction program (professional development and standards-based evaluation as they relate to teacher efficacy, retention, and job satisfaction).

According to our District's procedures, school participation is voluntary and subject to the authority of the school administration. To administer your study, you will utilize a mixed-method approach (on-line surveys, face-to-face interviews, questionnaires, and a focus group) to collect data from individuals whom the program impacts (approximately 80 teachers). It also noted that you will utilize existing program records of student and teacher data to complete your study.

The schools you are requesting are:

Elementary schools: Belle Glade; Benoist Farms; CO Taylor/Kirklane; Diamond View; Forest Park; Grove Park; Hope-Centennial; Jupiter; Lincoln; Pioneer Park; Rolling Green; Rosenwald; Seminole Trails; West Riviera; Westward.

Middle schools: Bear Lakes; Conniston; Jeaga; J.F. Kennedy; Odyssey; Okeehetee.

High schools: Boynton Beach; Forest Hill; Glades Central; Lake Worth; John I. Leonard; Palm Beach Lakes; Santaluces.

K-12: Village Academy.

As you conduct your research, please use the following guidelines:

- Contact no schools other than the schools listed above;
- Your research activities at the school must not occur during the testing window of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The FCAT testing window includes pre-test, administration, and post-test activities tentatively scheduled from February 20, 2012 – April 20, 2012;
- Summarize findings for reports prepared from this study and do not associate responses with a specific school or individual (information that identifies our District, schools, or individual responses will not be provided to anyone except as required by law).

Palm Beach County Schools - Rated "A" by the Florida Department of Education 2005 – 2011

www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us

The School District of Palm Beach County is an Equal Education Opportunity Provider and Employer

Page 2 of 2
 Ms. Denise S. Beattie
 January 25, 2012

If your research requires the use of additional resources in the future, you must submit a written request to this office and then wait for a response before proceeding. You must submit one copy of the study results to the Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment no later than one month after completion of the research.

Thank you for your interest in our District.

Sincerely,

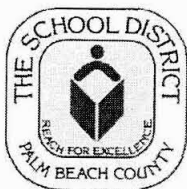


Mark Howard
 Director, Research, Evaluation, and Assessment

MH/RP/ts

c: Roxanne Curtiss, Principal, Belle Glade ES
 Ruthann Miller, Principal, Benoist Farms ES
 Agatha Gragg, Principal, C.O. Taylor/Kirklane ES
 Carolyn Seal, Principal, Diamond View ES
 Suzanne Matuella, Principal, Forest Park ES
 Eric Gross, Principal, Grove Park ES
 Julie Hopkins, Principal, Hope-Centennial ES
 Daniel Smith, Principal, Jupiter ES
 Tracy Sims, Principal, Lincoln ES
 Adam Miller, Principal, Pioneer Park ES
 Sandra Sanchez, Principal, Rolling Green ES
 Shundra Dowers, Principal, Rosenwald ES
 Judith Garrard, Principal, Seminole Trails ES
 Tonja Lindsey-Latson, Principal, West Riviera ES
 Melvin Pender, Principal, Westward ES
 Kirk Howell, Principal, Bear Lakes MS
 Oscar Otero, Principal, Conniston MS
 Kevin Gatlin, Principal, Jeaga MS
 Corey Brooks, Principal, J.F. Kennedy MS
 Bonnie Fox, Principal, Odyssey MS
 David Samore, Principal, Okeeheelee MS
 Karen Whetsell, Principal, Boynton Beach HS
 Mayra Stafford, Principal, Forest Hill HS
 Anthony Anderson, Principal, Glades Central HS
 Terry Costa, Principal, John I. Leonard HS
 George Lockhart, Principal, Lake Worth HS
 Anthony Hamlet, Principal, Palm Beach Lakes HS
 Kathleen Orloff, Principal, Santaluces HS
 Guarn Sims, Principal, Village Academy

Appendix F: School District of Palm Beach County Approval (Added Schools)



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

MARK HOWARD
DIRECTOR

MARC BARON, Ph.D.
CHIEF, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND ASSESSMENT
3370 Forest Hill Boulevard, Suite B-246
West Palm Beach, FL 33406-5871

Ph. [REDACTED]
www.palmbeachschools.org/dre/

February 22, 2012

Ms. Denise S. Beattie
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Beattie:

The Superintendent's Research Review Committee has approved your request to include two additional schools to your original Research Request entitled, *Evaluation of the Impact of a Comprehensive Induction Program in a Large Urban School District*, in the School District of Palm Beach County (the District). The purpose of your study is to explore the effectiveness of the New Teacher component as well as two other main support structures of the district's induction program (professional development and standards-based evaluation as they relate to teacher efficacy, retention, and job satisfaction).

According to our District's procedures, school participation is voluntary and subject to the authority of the school administration. To administer your study, you will utilize a mixed-method approach (on-line surveys, face-to-face interviews, questionnaires, and a focus group) to collect data from individuals whom the program impacts (approximately 80 teachers).

The additional schools you are requesting are Heritage Elementary School and Pahokee Middle School.

As you conduct your research, please use the following guidelines:

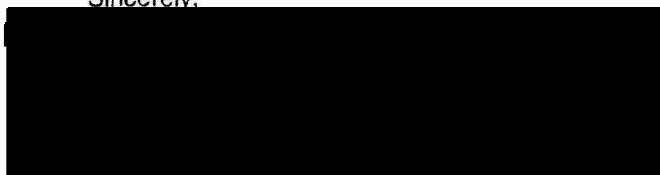
- Contact no schools other than the schools listed above;
- Your research activities at the school must not occur during the testing window of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The FCAT testing window includes pre-test, administration, and post-test activities tentatively scheduled from February 20, 2012 – April 20, 2012;
- Summarize findings for reports prepared from this study and do not associate responses with a specific school or individual (information that identifies our District, schools, or individual responses will not be provided to anyone except as required by law).

Page 2 of 2
Ms. Denise S. Beattie
February 22, 2012

If your research requires the use of additional resources in the future, you must submit a written request to this office and then wait for a response before proceeding. You must submit one copy of the study results to the Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment no later than one month after completion of the research.

Thank you for your interest in our District.

Sincerely,



MH/RP/ts

c: Seth Moldovan, Principal, Heritage Elementary School
Lavoise Smith, Principal, Pahokee Middle School

Appendix G: Focus Group Interview Questionnaire

Induction Program Description

- Describe the new teacher induction program you are involved.

Mentor Component

- Were you assigned a mentor this year?
- How often did you meet with your mentor?
- What impact does mentor have in helping you grow as an educator?

Teacher Evaluation System

- How often did your on-site support team (administrators, coach, Learning Team Facilitator, etc.) visit your classroom during instructional time to observe and provide non-evaluative feedback?
- What was the most important piece of the evaluation system that helped you to grow as an educator?

Professional Development

- What is your perception of the professional development provided by your school?

Appendix H: Email Describing Non-Threatening Environment

On Tue, Feb 7, 2012 at 9:15 PM, Denise Beattie

<[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hello and thank you for volunteering to be a part of the focus group for my doctoral studies. Will it be OK for us to meet somewhere, maybe a Barnes and Noble or Panera? I am in Palm Beach Gardens and know that it will take a long time for me to drive to the glades in the evening. Please let me know your thoughts. I am having a focus group on the 15th at the Pew at 4. If you would like to attend that meeting it would be wonderful!! If not, we can meet on February 16th around 4:30 at a place most convenient to you. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Warm Regards,

Denise Beattie

NTC Instructional Mentor/ESP, Professional Development
Pew Leadership Center
[REDACTED]

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254 MS 9437
06/30/14 39800 SFLB

RT Group